

C. V. Lupton

A D V I C E
TO A
S T U D E N T
IN THE
U N I V E R S I T Y.



A D V I C E

TO A .

S T U D E N T

I N T H E

U N I V E R S I T Y ,

C O N C E R N I N G T H E

Q U A L I F I C A T I O N S A N D D U T I E S

O F A

M I N I S T E R O F T H E G O S P E L

I N T H E

C H U R C H O F E N G L A N D .

B Y

J O H N N A P L E T O N , D . D .

C A N O N R E S I D E N T I A R Y O F H E R E F O R D ,
C H A P L A I N T O T H E L O R D B I S H O P O F H E R E F O R D .

O X F O R D ,

P R I N T E D F O R F L E T C H E R A N D H A N W E L L ;

S O L D B Y M E S S . R I V I N G T O N , L O N D O N .

M D C C X C V .

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IMPRIMATUR,

JOHAN. WILLS,
VICE-CAN.

MARTII 2, 1795.



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TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

JOHN BUTLER, L.L.D.

LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD.

MY LORD,

I Have been induced to lay together, in the following treatise, a few thoughts which former situations, and my present relation to your Lordship, have suggested to me. I began it with a view to assist a young person whose good conduct I have at heart; hoping, at the same time, it might be serviceable to many others. I shall rejoice if it should, in any degree, promote a principal object of your Lordship's Pastoral Vigilance; which, with your other virtues, make it, as I believe, the universal wish of all orders in your Diocese, that you may long continue among them. I need
not

not say how much this sentiment is heightened
by the honour of more frequent intercourse, in

Your Lordship's

Dutiful and Obligated

Humble Servant,

JOHN NAPLETON.

STOKE EDITH,
Jan. 31, 1795.



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ERRATA.

- P. 2. l. 25. for *of* read *and*.
P. 4. l. ult. read συνθεσις.
P. 48. l. 19. read *emphasis*.
P. 64. l. 6. read *medyator*.
P. 111. l. 5. read *sixty-seventh*.
P. 126. l. 22. after dispensation, add, *with respect to one of
the Cures.*



A D V I C E

TO A

STUDENT

IN THE

UNIVERSITY.

CHAP I.

THE IMPORTANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
PASTORAL OFFICE.

YOU ask my opinion upon Three Points. First, you desire to know whether I approve your inclination to enter, in due time, into Holy Orders. Secondly, you wish me to advise you, how to prepare yourself for this profession. Thirdly, you request some instruction relative to the discharge of the Duties of it, and to the further conduct of your Life and Studies.

I commend your early attention to these important inquiries. I wish every young person to choose his plan of life with the same delibe-

ration, and to feel the same solicitude to execute it ably and diligently. Much private satisfaction and public good arise from this prudent and conscientious forecast; in no case more, than in the subject of your present consideration.

I CAN give you no determinate answer to your first question. I will lay before you the principles upon which you may resolve it yourself.

The design of this profession is to promote the happiness of mankind by recommending to them the knowledge and practice of Religion. It has this end in common with every other calling, that it proposes the advancement of the general welfare; but it views this welfare in reference to more important objects, and to a longer period. It does not content itself with endeavouring to diminish the evils, and to increase the comforts, of this present life; to meliorate our condition in mind, body, or estate. These are indeed intermediate objects, which deserve our attention; and the prosecution of them makes a part of our duty. But the Pastoral Office looks forward to the ultimate purpose of our immortal being, the perfection of happiness of our nature in a future state.

The mean by which this profession pursues it's end is, recommending the knowledge, and practice, of Religion. Religion is a system of truths and duties delivered to us by the so-

vereign Author and Disposer of our being, declarative of his nature, his will, and his designs concerning us. These truths and duties are, some of them clearly, others conjecturally, others in no degree, discoverable by Natural Reason: all of them are made known by Supernatural Revelation; in part and gradually by Moses and the Prophets; completely and finally by our Lord Jesus Christ and his Apostles. The knowledge and practice of these truths and duties, is the mean appointed by God to man for the attainment of everlasting perfection and happiness. The profession, therefore, which aims to lead him to this end, must necessarily propose and recommend this mean.

As every man is obliged by his relation to God and his Fellow-Creatures to promote the well-being of his neighbour, his country, and all mankind; so is the Christian more than any other, in proportion * to the more enlightened sense of natural duty which his Religion inspires, the express laws which it imposes, and the larger sphere of benevolence which it opens to his view †. And the general obligation of every Christian is bound more strictly upon the Minister of the Gospel, by particular engage-

* See Luke xii. 47, 48.

† Chrysostom even says, ἡδὲ γὰρ αὐτὸς τούτῳ πιστεύει ἔχει, ὅτι σωζομέναι εἰσὶν τὸν οὐδὲν εἰς τὴν τῆ πλησίου καμνοντα σωτηρίαν. De Sacerd. vi. 10. p. 254. ed. Hughes.

ment and specific vow. Hence as christian charity is, with respect to it's degree and object, an improvement of natural philanthropy, so is the clerical profession a special recognition and a promised exaltation of christian charity.

You will be set apart to this Office, not by your own assumption *, nor yet by virtue of any institution merely civil, changeable therefore or terminable by human prudence or power; but by an ordinance of heavenly origin and perpetual duration. You will derive your designation from the Divine "Author and Finisher of your faith †:" who, having received from the Father "all power in heaven and on earth ‡," and being made "Head over all things to his Church §," gave this commission to the chosen witnesses of his miracles and ministry: "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo! I am with you *πας τας ημερας εως της συντελειας του αιωνος §*;" "I am with you, by

* Heb. v. 4.

† Heb. xii. 2.

‡ Matth. xxviii. 18.

§ Eph. i. 22.

§ Matth. xxviii. 19, 20. The other places in the New Testament where this phrase occurs are Matth. xiii. 39, 40, 49, xxiv. 3,

‘ my Spirit protecting and assisting you ; not
 ‘ with you only, mortal men, who shall speedily
 ‘ take up your cross and follow me, nor shall
 ‘ remain, one * excepted, even to the conclusion
 ‘ of this present age or Jewish dispensation ;
 ‘ but also with your successors, so long as there
 ‘ shall be disciples and baptism,’ “ even unto
 “ the end of the world.” You will receive
 this delegation in the way prescribed by the
 example of the Apostles and their immediate
 successors, and by the primitive practice of the
 universal Church ; and also according to “ the
 “ order of the particular Church” of which you
 are a member, and of “ the Realm †” of which
 you are a subject ; under temporal constitutions,
 which afford you, in the discharge of your spi-
 ritual function, protection, maintenance, and
 honour. Upon the whole, you will be admit-
 ted, under the divine appointment and human
 regulation, to the office and character of a spe-
 cial friend of mankind, an exemplary disciple of
 Jesus Christ, and a delegated minister of his
 Gospel in the place and situation to which you
 shall be appointed by the laws of your country :
 and you will, by your own free choice, by reli-
 gious vows, and by civil compact, draw more
 closely upon yourself the general antecedent
 bonds of duty to God and man.

* John xxi. 22, 23.

† Ordination Services.

I am persuaded that I have said enough to lead you to the answer, which You only can give to your first question. You will consider the high end of this profession; the sacred mean which it employs; the importance of it to mankind; it's divine appointment; the responsibility of him who undertakes it; the necessary purity of his life and sincerity of his intentions. You will estimate the mental qualifications which it may require; and the fair portion of industry that may be needful, first, for the attainment of these qualifications, and afterwards, for the useful application of them. You will anticipate, in your future exercise of this profession, the commendation or reproach of your own heart: you will contemplate the approbation and the displeasure of Him who "is greater than your heart, and knoweth all things*." I say nothing of public opinion and secular respect; although That is not to be slighted, without injury to inward principle as well as to external advantage; for there is some truth in the intimation of the sententious Politician, "*contemptu famæ contemni virtutes*†:" and the same high sense of honour, whether it arise from a quick feeling of moral obligation, or from an early-imbibed habitual reverence for the opinion of mankind, whether it be virtue,

* 1 John iii. 20.

† Tacit. An. iv. 38.

or a guard of virtue,—the same sentiment, which would deter you from entering into any other profession or calling * without the intentions and qualifications requisite, will at least Equally restrain you from assuming a religious character, to which your life and manners are not likely to correspond ; and from entering into new engagements with society, which you do not feel yourself capable and determined to fulfil.

Under the influence of these considerations, you will be able to decide, whether they who desire to see you good, and honoured, and happy, and wish True Religion to be understood, and revered, and practised, in their own country and in all the world, ought to approve your inclination to become a Minister of the Gospel in the Church of England.

* Νυν δε οικίαν μεν οικοδομησεσθαι εδεις αν υποχισθαι τολμησειε των ηκ
 οτων οικοδομικων ουδε σωματων αψασθαι νεροσηκωτων επιχειρησειε αν τις
 των ιατρειων ουκ ειδωτων κ. τ. λ. Chrys. de Sacerd. iv. 2. p. 164.

Δια τι γαρ περι γραμειας και εμποριας και γεωργιας, και των αλλων των
 βιωτικων, βουλης προκειμενης, ουτε ο γεωργος ελοιτ' αν πωλειν, ουτε ο γρα-
 τικωτης γεωργειν, ουτε ο κυβερνητης γρατευεσθαι ; Ibid. p. 168.

CHAP. II.

PREPARATION FOR ORDERS. DEACONS.

YOU perceive then that the First, indispensable, PREPARATION for Holy Orders is that of the heart and affections. To the schools of the Prophets, above all others, suits the ancient motto, ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΜΗ ΚΑΘΑΡΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ. The love of God, the love of man, which flows immediately from it, the due government of ourselves, which is derived from both; this compendium of all sound philosophy; this sum of the Law, and the Prophets, and the Gospel; this rational criterion, by which we measure our hopes of the young, our esteem for those in maturer life, and our reverence for the aged; these virtues must surely constitute the primary qualification of Him, whose office it is to set forth continually their religious obligation, to unfold their intrinsic reason, loveliness, and utility, and so recommend them to the understanding and affections of mankind. If the truths upon which these duties are founded have not obtained the full assent of your own understanding; if they have made no impression upon your own affections; above all, if they have

not influenced your practice ; wave, for the present at least, all thoughts of a profession, which will enhance your prior, unsatisfied, obligations, and will render your failings more painful and dishonourable to yourself, and more displeasing and pernicious to the world. Wait for the more happy season, when *vivâ voce* instruction, reading, meditation, and example, shall have better formed your principles and regulated your life. Become a faithful servant of God, and a true disciple of Christ ; and then you may aspire, with comfort and confidence, to be a Minister of Religion, and a Preacher of the Gospel.

The Second preparation for Holy Orders is the acquisition of an adequate portion of learning ; first, elementary and general, such as is expected in every educated person,—which has been hitherto, and will for some time continue to be, the object of your pursuit ; secondly, special or professional, such as will be requisite for the performance of your Office,—which is the subject of our present inquiry.

Upon this head, the first question which arises is, at what age, or at what standing in the University, I would advise you to turn aside out of the wider path of general learning, into the line of study which leads directly to the knowledge of your intended profession. This is a point which deserves the well-advised consideration of

every Scholar who designs himself for a particular calling. Here are two extremes to be avoided. On the one hand, he may suffer greatly by entering too Early on his professional study: which can never be advantageously pursued without previous application to general literature, philological and philosophical. Without some knowledge of the learned languages, and an acquaintance with a few of the best classical writers, his means of information will be limited, and his manner of communicating his sentiments will be ungraceful. The study of the sciences strengthens the understanding, habituates it to calm and orderly discussion, and furnishes it with topics of argument, illustration, and ornament, upon every subject. On the other hand, these preliminary acquirements, however generally necessary, and always desirable, must not be suffered to encroach too far upon the only time which the shortness of human life, and the exigency of particular situations, allow to the attainment of the substantial knowledge of the profession itself. I have known many a young Academic destined to the Bar fall into the First error; and lose much of the benefit of an enlarged education by his impatience to engage in Blackstone's Commentaries, when, after the example of this Author himself, (as we may fairly infer from his work, and have other reasons to believe) he ought to have been

applying himself to Logic, Ethics, and Metaphysics, forming his taste by Longinus, Cicero, and Quinctilian, and accustoming his mind to sound argument, demonstrative or probable, by a book of Euclid, and a prelection of Sanderson. But the Student designed for the Church more frequently commits the Second, and (if it be not very speedily and industriously remedied) the more pernicious, mistake. He improves and amuses himself, more or less, according to his talents, industry, and opportunities, in the pursuit of general learning, till the eve of his expected Ordination. He then suddenly undertakes to write for the pulpit upon the strength of a few successful efforts in a poem, essay, or declamation: he depends upon his mathematical knowledge for an intuitive comprehension of the reasoning of St. Paul: and expects that his intimacy with Sophocles or Demosthenes shall compensate for the want of even a superficial acquaintance with the sacred Historians, the Prophets, and the Evangelists. “Exclamet
 “*Melicerta perisse Frontem de rebus* *.” A partial ground, and palliation, of this his error may be, that the statutable regulations, I believe, of Both our Universities, very rationally suppose the first four years to be spent in the cultivation of such introductory and general

* *Perf. v. 103.*

learning, as is necessary, useful, or ornamental, to every profession, to every course of mature study, and to every active, or even retired, situation in life. And it is most happy when a Scholar designed for a profession is enabled by family circumstances, or the assistance of a foundation, to form himself entirely upon this eligible plan. It is particularly desirable for Students who are to be candidates for the Ministry ; because while Others, after they leave the University, usually pass to some second scene of professional Education, These remove precipitately to the immediate employments of the Profession itself.

If therefore you have the command of your time, you cannot do better than to follow the usages of your University. You will pursue the general stated course of education for four academical years, or three civil years complete at the least : and then devote the three years following to your particular preparation for Orders ; adding to each of these periods so appropriated, as much time as your plan of life will allow. But if your circumstances do not admit of this distribution ; if you foresee that you are doomed to be a candidate for Deacon's Orders, or even to aspire to the sole care of a parish, immediately upon taking your first degree, (I am very unwilling to suppose, sooner,) you will remedy the evil of your situation as well as you can. You are

obliged to compress the main business of six or seven years into something less than four. To effect this object in any satisfactory degree, the only means, I conceive, are ; first, to use extraordinary diligence ; secondly, to abridge discreetly your academical or general studies ; thirdly, so to select and arrange them, that a considerable part of them may bear a direct and immediate reference to your professional studies ; and fourthly, to begin your preparation for Orders, concurrently with your other employments, at the opening of your second year.

Whichever of these may be your situation, whether you are likely to be a candidate for Orders at four, or five, or six, years standing, or later, the following hints may be useful to you.

From this your first residence in the University have your profession constantly in your view. Besides that this foresight will have a happy influence upon your sentiments and manners, it will also (which is the immediate subject of our present consideration) give a reasonable bias to the train of your literary thoughts and general studies.

Attend with alacrity and spirit to the usual academical courses of Logic, Ethics, and Metaphysics. These studies are more easy, useful, and even necessary, than they who slight them are apt to imagine. A small portion of time

and industry will suffice for them. They will have a considerable effect, through your whole life, upon the clearness of your thoughts, and the precision of your language. The technical terms and distinctions belonging to them are frequently commodious in learned discussions; and they occur so familiarly in the writers of the last century, and in some who lived in the beginning of the present, that you would do well to acquire them, were it only as you learn dead or foreign languages, for the sake of conversing freely with those who use them.

Learn the elements of the Hebrew Language without delay. You never will have more time for this undertaking, or better relish, or more ready ability. Your future progress in this tongue (or other kindred ones) will depend upon circumstances, which you cannot now foresee, nor need to consider. You may be assured that even a superficial knowledge of it will be useful and agreeable to you; and without an improved acquaintance with it you will not be a complete Divine.

Whatever may be your present or future acquirements in Grecian Learning, secure to yourself the knowledge of the language and phraseology of the New Testament. This book is to be your manual and your guide through life; the authentic oracle to which you are constantly to resort, for doctrine and for precept, in order to

the edification of yourself and others. Your early proficiency in it will be your passport into the Sanctuary : your further progress will be very much the measure, and the mean, of your worthy administration there. You may have heard concerning an Eloquent Father of the Eastern Church *, that he was accustomed, I suppose in his younger days, to have Aristophanes always under his pillow ; and of a venerable English Bishop †, that he had read Tully's Offices twenty times over, and in his old age had the book by heart : but as it is evident from the writings of both these Divines, that they were perfectly conversant with a volume of higher order and origin, so I hope that You will at no time suffer it to be driven from your table by any Classic Author, ancient or modern, however entertaining or improving. I wish you indeed, at a convenient season, and the sooner the better, to be acquainted with the ancient poets, orators, and philosophers : but how preposterous would it be to offer yourself for the Ministry of the Gospel, better informed in the ethics of a Grecian School, the moral sayings of a Tragedian, or the dying conversations of the Athenian Martyr, than with the Sermons, and Parables, and last Injunctions, of our Blessed Saviour ? I will add, how unscholarlike and disgraceful,

* Chrysostom.

† Sanderfon.

after some years residence in a University, to know little or nothing of either ? . The phraseology of the Septuagint (I speak not here of the other uses of this version) is a natural comment on the language of the New Testament. You will have a ready opportunity (and without any expence of time) of carrying on your acquaintance with both together, by reading them, as is usual, with the lessons in your College Chapel. The lasting benefit of four years PERSEVERANCE in this easy task is scarcely to be calculated.

Whatever book of any kind you are about to read, acquaint yourself with the life of the Author, and the principal incidents of his times. His sentiments usually take some degree of tincture from these circumstances ; and his writings naturally allude to them : this knowledge, consequently, will enable you to accompany him with greater facility and advantage. For this reason, after the usual application to some sketch of ancient and modern History, I wish you to be particularly conversant with the transactions of England, and of other nations so far as relates to Learning and Religion, and with the lives of Eminent Men, from the beginning of the sixteenth century down to the present time. This knowledge is easily and pleasantly attained, while your curiosity is active, and your memory vigorous.

Among your Classics, be careful not to omit Cicero. In his Ethical and Theological compilations and researches, you have the result or compendium of All which Philosophy, with such assistance as it may have had from primitive traditions or later communications with the Jews, could do in Morality and Religion. It's excellencies will shew you the folly of depreciating Reason; and it's defects will convince you of the fatuity of rejecting Revelation. And when you turn to his arguments and declamations in active life, you will perceive how unsteadily the divine meditations of his closet affected his practical sentiments; or, it may be, only his public professions*. Besides these more solid advantages to be derived from reading the works of Cicero, I just mention another, which may happen to be useful to you, a fluency and correctness in writing or speaking Latin.

After the ethical books of Cicero, particularly his Offices, let me advise you to read the Preflections of Bishop Sanderson. I propose them to you on two grounds. The First, as I would recommend the criticisms of Aristotle or Longinus, not only for the general justness of his decisions upon the cases before him, but also

* E. g. Comp. De Senect. 23. and pro Cluentio 61. But it will be more candid, and in all probability, more just, to consider De Senect. as his Second and Decided thoughts.

for his manner of stating and resolving, and for the habit of method and precision which you will in all probability learn from him: as the performances of great Masters in every art, not only instruct or entertain you, but inspire you with a relish for the art itself, improve your taste and judgment in it, and (if you advance so far) facilitate and heighten your execution. And you will agree with me in thinking that few arts or sciences are of more importance, especially to a professed Divine or Moralist, than Casuistry, or the application of law to particular cases, in order to guide the conscience of yourself and others in all situations and circumstances. My second reason for recommending to you these Prelections, is, that the plan of them (as became the Chair whence they were given) is to determine every question by the joint authority of Scripture and Reason; that is by the Word of God explained, or, if occasion be, supplied, by the reason of the thing. This is to refer the conscience at once to it's "proper and adequate rule *." Any decision proceeding upon narrower grounds is a mere hypothetical prolusion, applicable to no existing case; as if an English Counsellor (I believe I borrow the allusion from a living Author of great merit) should give an opinion founded solely on the Common Law without regard to

* This point is more fully discussed in Chap. VIII.

the Statute Law, or on the letter of the Statute simply interpreted, without any respect to the principles and spirit of the Common Law. Many passages in these prelections allude to the history of the times near which they were written *, and refer to questions, ecclesiastical and civil, fiercely agitated in those days : you are not concerned in the accuracy of every phrase and statement on these topics.

Accustom yourself early to Composition in English and Latin, and even, occasionally, and in small portions, in Greek. Do not imagine that the time you shall spend in cultivating the syntax and elegances of a Classical Language will turn to no account towards your facility or correctness in writing and speaking in your own. Consider any such suggestion as an ignorant plea of indolence. You will find the fact quite opposite : and the reasons may easily be given. However, after a season, incline most to English composition, and exercise yourself constantly in some kind of it or other, original, abridgment, or translation. Whatever extracts you make from any writings, wherein the matter, and not the style, is the object of your notice, digest the sense, and set it down nearly in your own words. Read, at the same time, some of our best English prose writers,

* A. D. 1646—7.

such as Mr. Dryden, Dr. Swift, and Mr. Addison, and our higher poets. After essays on other subjects, such as your studies or inclination may suggest, you will naturally turn your thoughts to the kind of composition, which will hereafter demand your principal attention. And as your preparation for Orders approaches, you will do well to write upon some moral or theological subject, with which you are competently acquainted; sometimes from your own fund entirely, at others with the assistance of some good Author.

Lastly, have always in use some treatise of Morals and Practical Divinity for the employment of Sundays, and occasional hours on other days. This is a point of spiritual prudence in every man; it particularly becomes a Scholar; and still more a Scholar with your views. This habit will keep your attention alive to every duty, and will preserve your mind in a proper tone, for the life which you are to lead, and for the particular studies in which you are soon to be engaged.

I COME now to the Plan which I mean to recommend to you, as your actual preparation for Holy Orders. I propose it to you in two views: one, as an immediate qualification for a Useful Parish Priest, supposing all your literary prospects to terminate in that venerable charac-

ter: the other, as the foundation of your subsequent studies, in case you should aspire to add to it that of an Able and Learned Divine. I shall be careful to contract it within such bounds and measures, as to render it, on either supposition, with fair ability and reasonable industry, a PRACTICABLE Scheme. I begin with the preparation for Deacon's Orders.

THE foundation of all christian knowledge being laid in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, these are to be your first study. The history of the Creation, the Fall, and the Patriarchal Ages; the Mosaic Institutions; the principal transactions of the Chosen People; and the Prophecies; are all, either so intimately connected with the evangelical dispensation, or so continually alluded to by the sacred historians and preachers of it, that it is impossible, without a general acquaintance with the Old Testament, to obtain a competent understanding of the New. Yet, to read the whole volume of the Ancient Scriptures with accurate examination, is an undertaking beyond your present abilities and opportunity; and it will, I hope, make a considerable part of your future studies. In the mean time, therefore, I propose to you an introductory method, easy, pleasant, and satisfactory. Read the English Version with the Commentaries of Bishop Patrick and Mr. Lowth; occasionally consulting the Septuagint, and, if you

are already equal to it, the Hebrew. Throughout the historical parts have your eye upon Archbishop Usher's "Annals of the Old and New Testament," and mark the synchronisms : and after the Captivity take up Dean Prideaux's "Connection of the Old and New Testament;" an able and useful work, composed by the learned Author in a state of infirmity; a lively admonition to the younger Student, to lay up a treasure of literature, and to be as useful as he can in his office and situation, while he is blest with health and vigour of mind and body. About this time you will read Bishop Stillingfleet's "Origines Sacrae," which proves, with much good learning and sound argument, "the Truth and Divine Authority of the Scriptures, and the Matters therein contained;" and the posteriority in time, and defect in authenticity, of Other ancient histories; a book, by the way, which inculcates the same lesson of early activity by an example something different; for it is said to have been published in the Author's twenty-eighth year. Be not alarmed at the length of this work, or at the extent of the learned author's researches. When you begin the Prophets, read Bishop Sherlock's "Six Discourses on the Use and Intent of Prophecy in the several ages of the World."

You cannot easily imagine beforehand the advantages which you will derive from a steady application to this easy and entertaining course of

study ; first, in the solid and extensive information which it will afford you ; and secondly, in the inclination, as well as ability, which it will give you, to pursue the train of inquiry which is to follow.

When you have in this manner gone through the Old Testament, take up the New in the original Greek. Read the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles ; with the whole of Dr. Trapp's short Commentary on the Gospels ; and Dr. Hammond's and Dr. Whitby's Commentaries on the Gospels and the Acts, in parts, as you shall find occasion. Then read the Epistles, in such manner only as to become (if you are not already) master of the literal construction, and to have a good general idea of the subject and scope of each : reserving the detail of the argument, and the examination of the more difficult passages, for a second reading at a future time which I shall mention. Keep Archbishop Usher's Annals in your view.

When you begin to read the Holy Scriptures, provide a book, wherein you may enter an abstract of the Comment upon any text important, or difficult, or likely to escape your memory, together with the date of principal events ; leaving a blank page opposite for your future insertions, whether of explanatory notes, or of such parallel expressions as may occur to you in other ancient writers. I do not mean that

you should form a perpetual commentary ; which would fatigue and retard you : your present object is to obtain a general knowledge of the Whole Bible ; to take a comprehensive, transient, view of the authentic records and predictions which God hath been pleased to afford us of his dispensations to mankind. You will afterwards with more ease and advantage reconsider particular parts of the Sacred Volume, as your knowledge shall enlarge, and your judgment ripen. This book of extracts, gradually filled up, will be useful to you all your life.

While you are reading the New Testament, or immediately afterward, I advise you to take in hand Bishop Pearson's "Exposition of the Creed." This work states, with admirable clearness and fulness, the meaning of each article, the foundation of it in Scripture, an answer to all heretical notions opposing or perverting it, a confirmation or illustration of it drawn from the writings of Antiquity, and lastly it's practical necessity and application. You will peruse this volume with equal profit and pleasure ; and in no long time. Read it over again, after a short interval, in whole or in part, accordingly as you shall find your digestion and memory more or less perfect.

To this book you will do well to subjoin Bishop Burnet's "Exposition of the Articles of the Church of England." You have therein

a summary review of the evidences of the doctrines maintained by the Universal Church; and a state of the principal differences unhappily subsisting, near the times of the Reformation, between the Church of England and other Christian Congregations.

I now recommend a Second and more accurate perusal of the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, with the same Commentators consulted occasionally; adding to them for General Reference upon all the Scriptures, as soon as it shall be convenient to you to procure it, "Poole's Synopsis Criticorum aliorumque S.S. Interpretum."

During the whole time of your preparation, I advise you to have constantly in hand a volume of English Sermons. This habit will afford you several advantages. A well written sermon is an agreeable recreation after more severe application. You will often read one at short intervals of leisure, which would not, perhaps, otherwise be so usefully employed. By this practice alone you might gain, in time, a general view of the whole body of Divinity, and a clear comprehension of many principal passages in the Holy Scriptures; as there is scarcely a topic of doctrine or precept, or an important or difficult text, phrase, or term, which is not discussed by some one or more of our Preachers; and frequently in a more perspi-

cuous and finished manner, than is to be expected in any one system or general commentary. You will, moreover, improve your judgment in writing ; and also acquire a copiousness of language, and particularly a command of terms and phrases suited to the subjects of your future compositions. In the great variety of these valuable works, it is not easy to select a few, in preference, for your present perusal. I should, however, begin with the following. Archbishop Tillotson, for the number and importance of his subjects, and the plainness and clearness of his explications. At this early period of your theological studies, the novelty of the matter, and the pleasure of receiving information, may counteract any tendency which you may feel to disrelish the simplicity of his manner. Dr. Barrow, for his well known fulness of matter, and his habit of exhausting his subjects ; and also for his energy frequently, and sometimes for his eloquence, of expression. Bishop Bull, for the special importance of some of his subjects, and his plenary discussion of them. Archbishop Sharp, for his sound doctrine and solid sense, his forcible expression, and popular, yet not mean, style. Bishop Taylor, for his lively and fruitful imagination, and his rich vein of pious eloquence. Lastly, Mr. Norris, for the clearness of his conceptions, his thorough investigation of the point in hand, and his power-

ful application to the understanding. In reading his Sermons, you have no concern with his Philosophical notions : of which, however, it is but justice to observe, that, whether they are demonstrably true or not, they have this estimable quality in their favour ; they are at least in perfect harmony with truths most universally acknowledged, and most important to mankind ; and they form, both in probability and tendency, a decided contrast to the speculations of certain other profound reasoners, from the atoms of Democritus * down to the visions of his latest followers ; who, while they demand a considerable sacrifice of your Philosophy, go to the utter subversion of your Faith, and consequently to the subtraction of that large fund of present happiness, which is derived from the contemplation of a gracious Providence, and the prospect of a Future State.

And while you are profiting by the works of these learned and religious persons, you will feel an affectionate reverence for their memory : you will be thankful to God for the benefit of their labours : you may perhaps be incited to imitate them. It is indeed the honourable lot of but a Few,

——— *Pauci quos æquus amavit*

——— *aut ardens evexit ad æthera virtus †,*

* For these, when you shall have leisure, see Cudworth's Intellectual System, Book I.

† *Æneid.* vi. 129.

to instruct and entertain posterity by their writings; to transmit to after ages such fair and forcible representations of TRUTH, as may lead them, in the way of VIRTUE, to HAPPINESS. You may be one of those few. But Every Minister, and Every Christian, may, in his proportion, be a blessing to those who shall live after him, by the oral instruction and good example which he shall have given, to his Parish, or to his Family and Neighbourhood. “ Though dead, he may yet speak * :” the benefit, outliving the benefactor, may be transmitted to distant places and generations; and be diffused in a long and wide-extended series, known only to Him who has the whole chain of effects and causes, natural and moral, within his view.

When you shall have pursued this plan of study with attention and success, you may fairly offer yourself a Candidate for the Order of Deacons. You may indeed, at first sight, be inclined to think that I have required of you more than is necessary, or, perhaps, practicable. On the point of Necessity, you will probably come over to my opinion upon a very slight review. I would ask you, would you wish to become a Minister and Preacher of a Religion, without obtaining a tolerably clear conception of its EVIDENCES, DOCTRINES, and LAWS? without

* Heb. xi. 4.

taking a general view of the RECORDS in which they are contained? without conducting these inquiries with the deliberate attention of a man of Sense; and with some degree of accuracy suitable to a man of Education? Is it too great a consumption of time and thought, to read and digest a clear summary, proof, and illustration, of the ARTICLES of FAITH, which you are to state and explain to your congregation? Is it a superfluous acquirement to know the principal points of DISAGREEMENT in doctrine or discipline, which have divided the Church of Christ; and particularly those which distinguish that branch of it, in which you are educated a member, and desire to be appointed a "Watchman?" Can you deem it unnecessary to be instructed in the nature of the Christian Covenant, the benefits which it offers, the conditions which it imposes, the detail of those conditions in the several duties of a good life? and how is this knowledge to be obtained without application to the ORIGINAL SOURCES, and to the LEARNED LABOURS of those who have DRAWN it thence, and PREPARED it for your use? Or, lastly, would you be ambitious to be a Writer or a Speaker, in any science, or on any subject, without a moderate comprehension of it's elemental parts and leading topics; without some previous attention also to the rules of COMPOSITION, and to the idiom and powers of

the LANGUAGE, although vernacular, (which circumstance, while it renders the attainment more easy, makes the failure more disgraceful ;) without some acquaintance with a few of the best writers ; and some preparatory practice ? I add nothing concerning the High Importance of this undertaking, and of the due execution of it, to yourself, and to numbers, more than you can calculate at present, or perhaps will ever know.

The weight of this representation I will not labour to impress, by any repetition or enlargement, on a mind like yours. You have too great reverence for the Temple of God, to desire, were it permitted, without much studious premeditation to precipitate yourself into it, as “ the horse rusheth into the battle * ;” nor would your Virtuous Parents so far forget their veneration for things sacred, and their respect for themselves, as to will you to incur spontaneously the judicial degradation of the relicks of the House of Eli ; mercenarily presenting yourself before the Altar, without ability competent to the services of it ; and saying, “ Put me, “ I pray thee, into one of the priest’s offices, “ that I may eat a piece of bread †.”

But while I urge the necessity of this preparation, I have no design, or apprehension, of

* Jerem. viii. 6.

† 1 Sam. ii. 36. See Patrick in loc.

discouraging you. I mean only to excite your industry by a true representation of things. I think this preparatory learning as Attainable as it is Necessary. I verily believe it may be acquired, with fair ability and industry, within the time which I have above stated*, and even under the least advantageous circumstances†. But if several months more should be found requisite, you will surely have no reason to think your talents and labours ill applied; whether you consider the dignity and importance of the Office to which you aspire; the comparative time and industry which are given to the Other Learned Professions, and are necessary to a proficiency in Elegant Arts, or even Vulgar Trades; or lastly, the substantial improvement of your mind, by an acquaintance with many collateral branches of learning, as well as with that particular kind of knowledge, which claims the attention of Every Scholar, and is, truly, in some degree or other, the "One Needful" study of All Mankind.

As through your whole preparation, so particularly at the season immediately preceding your Ordination, you will be frequent in your prayers to God, for his Grace to confirm you in your good intentions, and to prosper your endeavours. At this time read with great deliberation and

* Page 12.

† Page 13.

attention the Ordination Service for Deacon and Priest: the latter as well as the former for Two reasons. One reason, because, if you are immediately intrusted, as it sometimes happens, with the care of a parish, you undertake much of the Duty and Responsibility of a Priest, though you are not yet bound by his specific vows, nor empowered to exercise his characteristic functions. The other reason, because when you are about to pass the Threshold of the Sanctuary, whence it will not favour much of religion or good faith, or respect for the laws of your National Church*, to go back, it is prudent to inquire and consider what will be your engagements, when you shall come to be admitted into the Inner Court.

One of the best companions and comments to these Offices will be Bishop Burnet on the Pastoral Care; the Sixth Chapter in particular. You will add Archbishop Secker's Charge to the Diocese of Canterbury in 1766, and Bishop Fleetwood's Charge to the Diocese of Ely in 1722.

Now, or at any other season of more leisure, you may read Chrysostom de Sacerdotio: who, though speaking of other times, and principally of a higher order in the Church, may yet afford some useful hints, and matter of consideration,

* See Canon 76. Concerning the Authority of these Canons, see Burn Preface to Eccl. Law, page 15—21.

to a Parochial Minister of the present day. This noted book will also give you a taste of the style of this eminent writer, and some idea of the customs and manners of his age. Of his Style, you have a good specimen in his Character of St. Paul, (IV. 6. p. 182. Ed. Hughes) and in his Illustration of the Christian Warfare. (VI. 12. p. 266.)

CHAP. III.

PREPARATION FOR PRIEST'S ORDERS.

TH E principal study which I shall recommend to you as a preparation for Priest's Orders, is an accurate second perusal of the Epistles. You may take the joint assistance of Dr. Hammond, Dr. Whitby, Mr. Locke, and Poole's Synopsis. Mr. Locke has considerable discernment in tracing the occasion and circumstances of St. Paul's Epistles. He may be read with advantage after one caution. In translating and explaining passages which have reference to the Divinity of our Lord and the Assistance of the Holy Spirit, his mind seems to be under a bias ; and his opinion ought not to have weight with you.

This part of your preparation I consider as a work on no account to be omitted, or slightly executed. If you neglect it at this season, or if you go through it carelessly, besides the vexation and dishonour of a deficient appearance at your examination, you may, too probably, never execute it well : and your unacquaintance with this important part of the Holy Scriptures will be a grievous hindrance and embarrassment to you in your reading and composition all your life. That you

may have time to complete this necessary work within the period usually intervening between the two Ordinations, I shall propose few other subjects for your present study; and such only as may be thought an agreeable variety.

Your best employment, I think, at this time will be; first, to contemplate afresh the series of arguments which prove the truth of the Christian Religion, of which you are now become a Minister: and secondly, to consider more distinctly the reasons which have induced the National Church in which you have been ordained, on the one hand to separate herself from the Romish Communion, and on the other, to persevere in that faith and polity, which have been unhappily disapproved by some of her Members, and moved them to separate themselves from Her. The end proposed by you in these meditations is, to qualify yourself the better, to guard your flock and others, as occasion may require, against the delusions of Infidelity, and also against "erroneous and strange doctrines" of Christian Religion "contrary to God's Word *."

The volumes which I select for these purposes are few and short. For the First, Dr. Jenkin "on the Reasonableness and Certainty of the Christian Religion:" Mr. Leslie's "Short Method

* Ordination Service. Priests.

“with the Deists:” Bishop Kidder’s “Demonstration of the Messiah:” Dean Prideaux’s “Life of Mahomet.” I mention Dr. Jenkin, rather than Grotius “de Veritate Christianæ Religionis,” because I think that you will read him with greater ease and pleasure, in less time (for that reason) although a larger book, and with more profit. You may possibly have leisure and inclination to read both. For the Second purpose, Dr. Bennet’s “Confutation of Popery:” his “Abridgment of the London Cases:” and his “Confutation of Quakerism.” These tracts of Dr. Bennet give plain and full answers to the pleas of each opposite party, in a manner level to the apprehension of every sensible reader, and very well corresponding also to the expectations of a Scholar.

At this time I presume you to be constantly practising Composition, and selecting proper subjects for the Pulpit. To the Sermons which I have before recommended, I would now wish you to add others of more modern style and manner; such as those of Bishop Atterbury, Dr. Rogers, Bishop Sherlock, Dr. Jortin, Bishop Warburton, Archbishop Secker (with his Lectures on the Catechism), Bishop Hurd, Bishop Porteus, and Dr. Thomas Leland.

These studies appear sufficient to prepare you for your admission to the Order of Priests. I add a few for the employment of your first year

after it. The whole will, I conceive, completely qualify you for the exercise of your Ministry, and lay a solid foundation for your further progress in Divinity.

In your preparation you will have read all the Scriptures except the Apocalypse. It is proper that you should now acquaint yourself with the Text of this mysterious Prophecy, and obtain a general idea of the Scope of it, according to the opinion of the most approved interpreters. The illustrious Mr. Mede, and after him Mr. Daubuz, have written at large upon this subject. It will be amply sufficient for your present purpose to read Bishop Hurd's "Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies concerning the Christian Church, and in particular the Church of Papal Rome."

The Apocryphal Books demand your perusal; some for their intrinsic merit; others for the honour which they have obtained of being placed in the same volume with the Canonical Scriptures, and inserted after them in our table of Lessons. I advise you to read them in the manner that I have suggested to you concerning the inspired writings of the Old Testament, with Mr. Arnald's Commentary as far as it goes.

I HAVE thought it commodious to the distribution of your time, and not disorderly in the arrangement of your studies, to defer to this period all disquisitions concerning the first princi-

ples of Natural Religion ; that is to say, the being and attributes of God, and the duties and expectations of Man his rational creature, so far as they are discoverable, or supposed to be discoverable, by the light of unassisted nature ; or, so far as, now that they are discovered, or illustrated *, by supernatural light, they may be demonstrated without adducing any proof from the Holy Scriptures.

In the examination of the evidences, doctrines, and precepts, of Revealed Religion, the being of God the Revealer, and every truth necessarily depending thereon, are assumed as *Data* ; which, as, on the one hand, they may be proved by their own proper evidence without recurring to any revelation, so, on the other, are confirmed by the revelation delivered down to us in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. Thus, the actual existence of the heaven and the earth demonstrates the necessary existence of a First Cause : the Scriptures declare that “ God “ created the heaven and the earth.” The necessary existence of God, the First Cause, involves his unity, eternity, and all other perfections : the Scriptures ascribe these perfections to him. His perfections imply certain duties, and raise certain expectations, in his reasonable creatures : the Scriptures prescribe these duties, and encourage these expectations ; with the ad-

* *Φωτισατο*; 2 Tim. i. 10. as some interpret the word.

dition, indeed, of Other duties and Further expectations, flowing from the particular situation of man, and the corresponding dispensation of God ; neither of which, without these Scriptures, would have been known to us. As therefore you might, with sufficient propriety, have begun with these principles of Natural Religion, and then proceeded to the evidences, doctrines, and precepts, of Revealed ; so now you may, with equal propriety, and, I think, with greater advantage, being well instructed in Revealed Religion, go back to the elements of Natural Religion, and the duties and expectations deducible from them. The path which you have pursued under the Greater light, you may now re-trace under the Less, so far as it will guide you.

Among the conclusions of Natural Religion, you will find Two particularly worthy of your notice : the first, a high probability, deducible from the nature of God and the actual state of man, that God would afford to man some Supernatural Revelation : the second, a similar probability, founded on the same grounds, that this Supernatural Revelation would bear some likeness or analogy, in it's limitations and imperfections, to the natural discoveries of Reason. The First of these considerations prepares the mind to receive the evidence recorded in the Mosaic and Evangelical Histories, that a Re-

velation hath been given. The Second tends to obviate any Objection to this evidence, drawn either from the limited information which this revelation may be calculated to afford, or from it's imperfect promulgation, or it's incomplete reception and influence.

You will find an able discussion of these and other kindred topics, in two works of moderate size : Dr. Clarke's " Discourses concerning the
" Being and Attributes of God, the Unchangeable Obligations of Natural Religion, and the
" Truth and Certainty of the Christian Revelation : " and Bishop Butler's " Analogy of Religion Natural and Revealed to the Constitution and Course of Nature. "

I HAVE drawn your plan of Study within as small a compass, as I think to be any way consistent with your satisfaction and credit, and the public good. I have omitted many excellent books, some of modern date, that I might not discourage you by number, or distract you by variety : these also, you will probably be advised, and, I hope, will be induced, to read at some convenient season. Concerning the Authors whom I have recommended to you, I have Two Observations to make.

The First observation respects their Matter, or Argument. In the variety of books which we have upon most subjects, I certainly should

not be forward to present to you, at present, any writer, however otherwise excellent, who maintained or insinuated positions derogatory or disrespectful to Revealed Religion, or to any doctrine which I conceive to be an essential part of it. I should esteem a Christian Preceptor terribly incautious, who should, for the sake of any acuteness, or wit, or poetry, or eloquence, introduce his uninformed and unexperienced pupil to the acquaintance, of Mr. Hume for example, or M. de Voltaire, or Lord Bolingbroke : nor should I think him very wise or considerate, if he put him upon reading “ the History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,” or “ the History of Ancient Europe, in Letters to a Nobleman,” or any of the Theological Romances of Dr. Priestley. I consider the works of such learned or ingenious men, some of them as intellectual nourishment, others as amusing trash, sprinkled, more or less, with a deadly poison : and I therefore look upon it as a duty of humanity, to warn every Young or Stranger Guest to abstain entirely from the suspicious entertainment, until “ by use he shall have his senses exercised to discern good and evil * ;” and until he shall have so long gradually mixed the venom with medicinal antidote or wholesome aliment, that it’s deleterious qua-

* Heb. v. 14.

lities will make no impressiion upon his frame; and so, like the famous King of Pontus *, he will not be able to destroy himself, though he should become so wretched as to desire it. I would guard with proportioned care against the early, imperceptible, infusion of slighter, or less dangerous, errors. At the same time, when I recommend a book to you, I do not mean to imply that it is the only good one upon the subject, or even the best upon every branch of it, or correct in every page; but that it is on the whole preferable for your purpose, as being, for example, useful in the choice of matter; or comprehensive in the plan; or brief, or masterly, or even agreeable, in the execution. A perpetual commentary on all the Scriptures of the Old or New Testament will probably be, in some points (as you read of the Pentathlos) inferior to a professed explanation of a single book. One able Expositor may be thought to enlarge the scope of a Prophecy beyond all just measures of interpretation: another may be imagined to err as much in contracting it. A good Reasoner may be supposed sometimes to bring forward an infirm argument, or to leave a stronger behind, or to place it in a bad light. A dispassionate Divine may, in a point not deemed fundamental, happen to entertain a no-

* A. Gellius, xvii. 16.

tion, which may not be satisfactorily deduced from the Scriptures, or may possibly appear liable to be disproved by them. These are faults, justly imputable, or actually imputed, to almost all writers. But they leave no dangerous prejudices upon the mind. Your ripening judgment will hereafter enable you to decide upon the point for yourself; or may perhaps shew you that it is needless, or impossible, to decide at all.

The Second observation respects the Style. I do not propose to you any writer as a perfect model. In some whom I recommend for the goodness of their matter, you may find, perhaps, grammatical errors, antiquated phrases, quaintness of sentiment, or indecorum of expression. Others, who are generally approved for their composition, are sometimes deficient in elegance, and even in accuracy: and some of the finest passages in our older preachers are rather to be admired, or faintly shadowed out, than closely imitated. In truth, I would not have you copy any one. It is in writing as it is in behaviour. Every one has an address and manner of his own, the compound result of his natural temper and genius, his education, studies, and employments, and the society in which he has lived: a borrowed one will not fit gracefully upon Him, how much soever it may become the Owner; and the more perfect the mimicry is, the more unpleasing will be the

effect. So in writing. Your style will take it's general colour from the studies and authors in which you have been conversant, the extent and accuracy of your critical observation, the clearness of your ideas, and the turn of your mind : no other language than your own will convey your sentiments perspicuously, forcibly, and agreeably. If you imitate, for example, Bishop Taylor, Lord Clarendon, Dr. Johnson, or even any one less peculiar, as Mr. Dryden, or Mr. Addison, you will probably be an indifferent copy, when you might have been a good original : and the more marked and prominent are the features of your favourite Master, the more affected and disagreeable will be the imitation. Instead of catching the terms, the syntax, the figures, the diffusion or the closeness, of any, even of the best, writers, aim rather at the Principles which laid the foundation of their excellence ; namely, a thorough knowledge of your subject ; a precision, and due arrangement, of your thoughts ; an early perusal of a few books of criticism ; attention to universal grammar, and to the idiom of your language ; a due consideration of the nature and design of your composition : with these preparations you may have a fair prospect of resembling them in their perfections, without the certain disparagement of a servile imitation, or the hazard of adopting their faults.

CHAP. IV.

THE DISCHARGE OF THE PASTORAL DUTIES.
THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE PUBLIC SERVICES.

WITH respect to the due performance of the PASTORAL DUTIES, you may have great assistance from many Episcopal Charges and Discourses of the last and present age. You will hereafter have further benefit from similar monitions and directions. I wish that all the charges which have been published, or a selection of them, were re-printed together in chronological order; with a further design of adding to the collection from time to time. It would form a very instructive compilation; not only for the ability which is shewn in many of them, but also because, from the nature and occasion of the composition, the pastoral duties are pressed upon the conscience with greater plainness and solemnity, than in discourses given by any other writers, or in any other form. With deference to these authorities, and, I believe, in perfect conformity to them, I offer you a few general hints, for your present preparatory information.

The discharge of your function will lie in Four Points: the administration of the public

services prescribed in the Liturgy; in which I include the delivery of your sermons: the composition of your sermons: private instruction and admonition: your own personal conduct. A Fifth point also will demand your consideration, whenever you shall be beneficed; which is the propriety of residing on your cure.

In the administration of the public services, the First thing to be attended to is a **JUST** and **DISTINCT ARTICULATION**. This is the primary principle of speaking or reading well: it is indeed the essence of human speech; and therefore selected by the discerning eye of the poet, as a characteristic, equally philosophical as Reason or Ridibility, of the human species*. The most melodious voice, in proportion as the Speaker, Reader or Singer, is indistinct in his articulation, affects the understanding, (however it be more pleasing to the ear) only as the notes of a bird or a musical instrument. Unless it give “*ευσημον λογον*,” an utterance significant, carrying symbols of ideas, it is not even “*γλωσση*,” a tongue known to Some; it is, contrary to the Apostle’s supposition, “*φωνη αφωνος*,” and “he that so speaketh,” readeth, or singeth, is a Barbarian†, “not only to one or more, “but to All.” In Public speaking or reading

* *γενειαι μεροπων ανθρωπων*. II. i. 250.

† 1 Cor. xiv. 9, 10, 11.

this quality is more especially requisite, from the ordinary size of the room ; the number and distance of the hearers ; the reciprocal dependence of the parts of a connected discourse ; and, in this particular case, the importance of the subject and occasion. ●

You will, in the Second place, be careful to read within the compass of your voice, and the strength of your organs. If you go beyond either, besides that you will give pain to yourself and your audience, you will not obtain your purpose, which is to be heard and understood ; in which object you cannot gain so much by the loudness of your voice, as you will lose by defect of clearness and modulation : you will also fail, more or less, in distinctness of articulation.

Thirdly, and principally, you will read with a gravity and seriousness corresponding with the state of your own mind, and with the similar disposition which you desire to find, or to excite, in the minds of others.

There should be a difference in your manner of reading the Prayers, and the Psalms and Lessons. The Prayers are clear and plain ; they require therefore scarce any emphasis or change of voice to unfold or impress them : nor does the reverence with which they are to be uttered admit such variations : a grave, equable, devout, tone is for the most part all that is necessary or

becoming. The same observation may be applied to such parts of the Psalms or Lessons, as are immediate addresses to Almighty God; and particularly to the many passages in the Psalms, which the Congregation may be supposed piously to adopt, and to repeat as their own ejaculations*.

The sense of the Psalms and Lessons in many other passages is not equally obvious: it is therefore convenient to read them with such judicious pauses, emphases, and changes of voice, as may help to open their meaning to the hearer, and impress it upon his mind; in short, in such a manner as any person who understands and feels them, and wishes to make them understood and felt, would Naturally read them. The passages below cited may serve as examples, to shew the necessity of pause and change of voice †, the utility of emphases ‡, the dependence which the hearer's apprehension of the plain meaning of the particular sentence §, or of the reasoning of the whole passage ||, or lastly the impression which it may make upon him ¶, will have upon your manner of reading.

But these several Variations are to be regulat-

* e. g. Ps. viii. 1—3, 4. &c. xix. 14, 15.

† Deut. iv. 41. Judg. v. 31. II. xxxviii. 21.

‡ Luke xvi. 8. § Tit. iii. 4, 5.

|| Rom. vi. 17, 20 and passim. Gal. iii. 20. Heb. x. 15—17.

¶ Numb. xvi. 29—33.

ed, not by the attention of the moment, but by your previous correct knowledge of the Sacred Text. This consideration is a strong additional argument for what I have so much pressed upon your notice, a competent acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures prior to your becoming a Candidate for Orders; in as much as without it you cannot read a Lesson, particularly in St. Paul's Epistles, but you incur the hazard of perplexing, or misleading, or at least not guiding, your hearers, and perhaps betraying to the more intelligent part of them your own ignorance. As, however, no one's information or recollection is as perfect as he himself could wish, I would recommend it to you as a subsidiary caution, for some time at least, to cast your eye upon the Lessons, and your abstract of notes if necessary, before you go to Church. I need not mention a further advantage of this good habit.

In the application of these principles one circumstance is always to be remembered. You are not speaking in your own person, nor representing, as on a theatre, any other: you are only reciting the words of a writer, or the speeches of other persons by him recorded. Though therefore it be convenient so far to vary your voice, as to convey to your hearers, and even to impress upon them, the Sentiment of the writer or speaker, it is perfectly incongruous to attempt to present his Tone or Manner. Con-

sidering, moreover, that the writer is a Sacred Historian, a Prophet, or an Apostle; and that the speaker introduced by him is generally a Prophet, or an Apostle, or an Angel, or our Blessed Lord upon earth, or the Almighty from Heaven, this dramatic imitation approaches to irreverence; and equally offends the piety, and the good sense or taste, of the Audience. It has, besides, an appearance of elaborateness and ostentation, in no performance surely so ungraceful, as in the administration of the offices of Religion.

The gravity and solemnity which is suitable to the Ordinary services, ought rather to be raised than remitted when you perform the Four Occasional. They are greatly capable of edifying a Congregation. They are heard under circumstances which come home to their interests and feelings. Two of them, the First and the Last offices of parental piety which the Church discharges towards her members, never fail, when properly delivered, to fix the attention of the Congregation: nor, in truth, can they have a more useful and affecting lesson, than the solemn dedication of their children to the service of God, with a recital of their own early engagements; or the melancholy, however hopeful*, resignation of their parents and kindred

* 1 Thess. i. 13.

into his hands, with a lively intimation of their own approaching summons and account. It is very desirable, in parishes wherein the frequency does not diminish the attendance, or destroy the impression; nor the quantity of duty exhaust the time and spirits of the Minister; that both these services should be read with great distinctness and devotion; and the Baptismal in particular, in such manner as to draw the attention and concurrence of the Whole Congregation. In our old Churches the Font is usually placed near the western end of the middle area: which situation has, I believe, been general, ever since it was removed, first from the Baptistry, and afterwards from the Porch *, as being most suitable to the rite which gives admission into the Church. It has this considerable advantage, that it is within the view and hearing of the Whole Congregation. In some modern Churches and Chapels the architect, ignorant, I suppose, of the meaning of this situation, and inattentive to the use of it, has been led by a mistaken notion of elegance to carry the Font to some obscure corner, whence the service can not easily be heard, and, in consequence, the congregation give little attention to it. The other Two occasional services occur at seasons,

* See Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church, B. VIII. C. VII. Sect. 1—6—A useful book on all similar subjects.

wherein it is natural for persons of any reflexion to be serious ; and if they be not, it is expedient to incite them to be so : and I believe you will always find that the small Congregation usually assembled at the celebration of Matrimony, will listen to the truths and obligations which the Church hath taken that suitable opportunity to inculcate, with a gravity and attention proportioned to the solemnity with which you shall administer it.

The Anniversary service of the Communion is, in subject and composition, so awful and affecting, that it dictates the deliberation, reverence, and pathos, with which it is usually delivered.

What I have said of the propriety of a devout and attentive delivery of all these services, ordinary or extraordinary, applies with increased force to the administration of the most solemn act of the Christian Religion, the Holy Communion.

The few hints which I have given you concerning your manner of reading the several parts of the Liturgy, may with some variation be useful to you in the delivery of your Sermons. In this portion of the divine service it is particularly requisite to keep your voice under command, because you have more occasion to vary it ; and also because, if you once raise it beyond a convenient pitch, you have no such breaks as occur in the Liturgy, wherein you may recover it.

The discourse being neither addressed to Almighty God, nor proceeding from him by his inspired messenger, as were the cases respectively in the prayers, psalms, and lessons, may admit more freely a judicious variation of voice and manner, and a certain temperate degree of ease and familiarity: both which may tend to impress more deeply the truth and importance of the points under discussion. Distinct articulation is still more desirable in this part of the service than in any other; as the loss of a word cannot here be replaced to the Audience by book or memory; and the chasm may frequently perplex the sense of the whole paragraph, and even sometimes obscure the argument of all the remaining discourse.

CHAP. V.

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS.

THE STYLE.

I COME now to a principal part of your literary labours, upon which the Success of your ministry will greatly depend ; the Composition, partial or entire, of your Sermons.

When you shall hereafter look round your Parish, and observe the incessant labours of one part, the various necessary employments of a second, and the social and other voluntary engagements of a third, you will think it a point of considerable importance to their sentiments and manners, and consequently to their final destination, that they should, one half hour in the week, have the great truths, and duties, and sanctions, of Religion presented to their view, in as clear and striking a light as you are capable of placing them. Though any One sermon, or any Course of sermons, may not have a sensible effect upon the hearers or readers, yet it is greatly owing, under the divine promise and assistance, to the unceasing instruction and exhortation conveyed in these discourses from the pulpit and the press, aided by other moral and theological writings, and by the constant use of an established formulary of public worship, that

True Religion is preserved in the world. Herein appears the wisdom of the institution, as derived from God, or regulated by man. Let not therefore the frequent absence, inattention, or slow improvement, of any part of your Congregation in the least dispirit you, or tempt you to relax your industry. Your most correct, and best adapted, performances are due to your hearers, whether few or numerous, careless or serious. Go on "sowing the seed with measured step,"* and unabating care. It may take root where you least expect; and grow and mature where you see it not. It's produce, be it great or small, may become the seed of some more plentiful harvest, which shall flourish when they that planted, and they that watered, shall be far removed. Be not weary in doing your part; and patiently leave the issue to him "that giveth the increase †."

I do not suppose it probable, or indeed necessary, that you should indite the Whole of Every sermon which you preach: but this I think indispen^sable; that you should very attentively consider every sermon whence you propose to transcribe, and adapt the matter, method, and language, according to your best judgment, to the understanding and exigencies of your Congregation; and suit the style, in particular, to

* Thomson Spring, 44.

† 1 Cor. iii. 7.

your own strength of voice and lungs, and your way and ability of speaking. Notwithstanding the great number and variety which we have of excellent printed sermons, there are few which a judicious Preacher would think proper to deliver exactly as they are. They are frequently too long for your purpose, the best of them especially; generally too diffuse, sometimes too concise; too argumentative; too complex; branching out into collateral subjects, not necessary, perhaps improper, for your Auditory; the style too involved; the language too learned: in short, highly instructive and entertaining to read in your closet; containing good matter of every kind, the greater part of it such as you would wish to lay before your flock; expressing it in many places in a manner well suited to their apprehension; and yet requiring considerable alteration to render them, upon the whole, completely intelligible and edifying to the greater part of most congregations. The advice, therefore, which I shall offer to you concerning the Composition of your Sermons, will be equally applicable, or nearly so, to all which I shall suppose you to deliver; not only to your own original productions, but to such discourses also, as you shall find it expedient to adopt, and necessary to new model.

The first praise of all composition is PERSPICUITY, or aptness to be understood; as that of

speaking or reading was supposed to be Distinctness*, or aptness to be heard: it being the end of language to convey as entire as may be the conceptions of one mind to another, as it is the immediate end of speaking to convey the language. This quality in composition becomes the more necessary, when the discourse is to be transiently heard, and not deliberately read, and occasionally reviewed; especially in a large assembly, composed of persons of diverse education and capacity.

The foundation of writing perspicuously is to Conceive Clearly: the most perfect Picture can be no more (unless by very rare and happy accident†) than a well wrought representation of the original as it lies in the Painter's mind. This faculty of conceiving clearly, although it be partly a gift of Nature, and partly the result of discipline and institution, yet depends equally, perhaps even more, upon your familiar acquaintance with the particular subject which employs your thoughts: as a person of a clear and cultivated understanding will often find himself confused, on a matter not within the compass of his information and frequent notice; while another

* P. 46.

† I leave to the experienced artist to determine whether the Poet's account of this matter is supported by fact.

"Her pencil drew what'er her soul designed,

"And oft the happy draught surpassed the image in her
"mind." DRYDEN ON Mrs. Killigrew. Stanz. 6.

of moderate sense and education shall think very accurately, upon points which he has laboured to comprehend, and been much accustomed to consider. The way therefore to have clear conceptions on any subject is to be generally conversant in the Science to which it appertains; and to have read and thought much upon that particular branch of it. You perceive how the Monitor of early and continued diligence meets you in every walk of your profession.

Having laid this foundation of perspicuous writing, Clearness of Conception—"scribendi recte, SAPERE"—permit me to offer you two initiatory rules, which appear to me to be just. First: accustom yourself to the use of Proper * terms, and of a clear, orderly, syntax or construction. This will not only best represent your thoughts to the minds of others, but will even assist you also in arranging and deducing them in your own: as the diagram which aids the Mathematician in demonstrating his theorem to another, had been previously useful to him in investigating it for himself. This simple form is the element or seminal principle of all good style; and will, in due time, with proper attention and culture, unfold itself in figurative terms and all the variety of construction, according to the genius of the writer, the kind of compo-

* i. e. not figurative.

tion, the nature of the subject, and the supposed comprehension of the reader or hearer. Secondly: let the statement of the point before you, and the proof or illustration of it, proceed in orderly progression, and by short steps; in such manner that each preceding sentence may be intelligible without the aid of the following; although the sentence following may afterwards, *ex abundanti*, reflect a light on the preceding. This rule is advantageous, I believe, to all composition; but is especially suited to an oral discourse; and still more particularly to one delivered in a Mixt Assembly; wherein the mind not having time to look back, nor perhaps always capacity to anticipate, should be put in clear and full possession of One proposition, before it is carried on to another: and may thus obtain a complete view and comprehension of the subject in an orderly succession of it's parts, although it could not have seen it distinctly in a Less Regular distribution, or have embraced it in the Whole Together.

You may perhaps conceive that this exactness of method will favour too much of Logical or Mathematical formality. Be assured, it will lead you into no such disgrace. The more Intelligent part of your Audience may perhaps discern, that you have imbibed some of the Spirit of these wholesome disciplines, though you have left the Body in the Schools. They may possibly ob-

serve, in the happy arrangement of your thoughts and expressions, a resemblance of some Good Author, whose native genius and discernment, spying at a glance the best forms of composition, may have led him directly to the practice without the theory; as Poets and Orators existed before Critics and Philologers. But these rare phenomena afford no reason, why Later Writers in every kind may not improve their sense and taste by the Precepts, as well as the Examples, of those who have successfully gone before them. And indeed it is most probable that the best Preachers of the last and present age, having by much previous reading acquired a fund of knowledge and command of language, formed their style and manner upon well digested rules and approved models; as well for the attainment of general excellence, as for the adapting of the character of their composition to the particular purposes which they had in view. It cannot be supposed that the copious vein of Bishop Taylor was not enriched and purified, by that abundance of classical and critical learning with which his mind was stored: that habits of close thought and meditation did not enable Dr. Barrow to exhaust every subject which he touched, to arrange his abundant matter in the best order, and to comprise it within the smallest dimensions: or, that the accurate, investigating, manner of Mr. Nor-

ris proceeded more from the clearness of his natural understanding, than from his early application to the instrumental art of Logic, and the preparatory discipline of Metaphysics. METHOD will instruct and please every hearer: the Educated may refer his information and satisfaction to some such principles as I have attempted to delineate: the Uneducated will derive His from the unobserved operation of the same causes; his plain understanding will be assisted in the reception of truth by that "LUCID OR-
"DER," which is as congenial to the human mind, and as necessary to it's distinct vision, as the element alluded to is to the Eye and the Sight; which we find and admire in every production of nature, and which we endeavour to imitate in every work of art; which we hence presume to be agreeable to Every created understanding, and therefore to the Supreme Creative Intelligence Himself.

I have advised you to begin with Proper terms, because they are more single and definite in their sense, and consequently less liable to misapprehension, than Figurative. For a similar and stronger reason, I wish you generally to prefer a pure English word to any one synonymous of foreign extraction. Our language has certainly been much enriched, strengthened, and ornamented, by the numberless words which it has incorporated from the Greek, and from the

Latin and it's offsprings, particularly the French. Many of these are so naturalized, and so interwoven with our common phraseology, that it is not easy, without some consideration, to distinguish them from the natives ; nor is it necessary to exclude them ; and it will sometimes surprise an attentive observer, to see how well even Some of the obscurer of them are understood by the unlearned. But many others are perfectly unintelligible to them. The instructive Preacher will therefore constantly have his eye upon this difference ; and consider to which of these classes his terms and phrases belong.

I think this caution necessary, in favour of the greater part of your Congregation, even with respect to such derivations from foreign languages, as are Legitimated by sufficient usage in correct writers and educated company. But as to some modern transfusions of French Idiom or Pronunciation, introduced by the unthinking or vain Traveller, the half educated Player, or the superficial Master of Languages or Elocution, I would avoid them altogether: they for the most part corrupt and obscure our Mother Tongue ; in common writing and speaking they are unpleasing ; in graver discourse, and in the Pulpit especially, they are offensive. The same censure may be applied, in a small degree, to any extravagant affectation of pronouncing every word as it is spelt ; that is,

of giving to every word such sounds only, as the letters of which it is composed appear, by certain preconceived rules, to represent. This novel scheme can be carried into execution, only on one of these two suppositions : either that we retain in our language no more articulate sounds, than can be distinctly and separately represented by our Twenty Six Letters in their different positions ; or that we invent more letters and positions, sufficient to represent distinctly and separately all the articulate sounds which now exist in it. The First, if it be practicable in more simple dialects, seems not to be so in a language of such diverse origination, and such consequent variety, as ours ; the Second, whenever it shall be effected, may answer the purpose. Mean time I just hint to you, that as, on the one hand, our pronunciation may possibly be preserved and improved by moderate and judicious attentions of this kind ; so on the other, to adopt and sanction ill-conceived or trifling innovations, is not suitable to the gravity of the Preacher, nor perfectly consistent with the duty of the Scholar.

A similar error is, to apply a supposed general rule of throwing the accent back upon the Antepenultima, to words in which it is not admissible : as, first, when the Penultima cannot be pronounced short, without distressing the organs of speech, and producing an indistinct articulation,

as, cōtēplate: secondly, when the Antepenultima cannot, consistently with analogy or custom, be pronounced long, as, Mediātor, and consequently the Reader is driven to confound it with the syllable next preceding and sound it, medyātors. The Sacred Appropriation of this word is, in my opinion, an additional reason for preferring the ancient pronunciation to this odd novelty. I have insensibly passed from the Words of your discourse to the manner of pronouncing them; which, although strictly belonging to the Delivery of your sermons, is so intimately connected with the Composition, that I can scarcely call these remarks a digression.

I have confined myself to the consideration of this single merit of PERSPICUITY, as being the necessary groundwork of every other. But I hope you will aspire at every perfection. The more you acquire of True Eloquence, the more effectually you will obtain the end of preaching, which is to instruct and persuade in things pertaining to the eternal happiness of mankind; and as TRUTH and GOOD will be the objects, and Religious Duty the motive, of all your exertions, you will, I trust, be secure from all temptation to Misuse and Pervert it; a weakness incident to all human excellence, to none more than to strong powers of arguing and illustrating. In proportion to your improved knowledge of divine subjects, and your increased ability to dis-

cuss them clearly, and impress them forcibly, you will be the more capable of making them intelligible to the Unlearned, as well as affecting to them and to the Instructed; and so, the more likely to obtain the most difficult object of a Preacher's province, which is, to gain the attention, and promote the edification, of Both.

It has been customary on the Continent to preach without a written sermon, extempore or memoriter, or partly each. The advantage of extempore preaching is, that it is apt, from its resemblance to familiar speaking, perhaps from a greater appearance of sincerity and earnestness, and possibly from a secret admiration of the talent, to command attention: the disadvantage is, that it must in it's greatest perfection want something, and generally a great deal, of that maturity of thought, and exactness of expression, which are very desirable in addresses of this nature, and are attainable in a precomposed sermon only. Preaching by memory unites, in a considerable degree, the benefits of both methods; but requires a strength of the faculty seldom possessed, and a consumption of time scarcely consistent with other studies and duties. As the practice of the Church of England relieves you from the necessity of either of these qualifications, this indulgence seems to be an equitable call upon you, in addition to other obligation, to give your sermons the advantages accruing from

this liberty, in their most ample extent ; which are, Perfect Correctness in composition and speaking : and further, while the written discourse before you gives you the security and composure necessary to a good delivery, a little attention and practice will enable you to leave it very frequently, and so to obtain in a degree the benefits, without the disadvantages, of not using any copy at all.

Bishop Burnet, in his discourse of the Pastoral Care, speaks well of preaching memoriter, but strongly recommends preaching extempore ; and points out a method of preparation for it. His directions lead you equally to a facility of Writing sermons : in that view they well deserve your perusal : you will find them in the ninth chapter. Mean time if you feel yourself capable of extempore enlarging upon notes, or varying with any advantage from a written sermon, as occasion may suggest, I do not absolutely dissuade you from it ; in your cursory explanations of the Catechism, and in that work only, I would recommend it ; supposing you, however, to be perfect Master of the subject, and to express your sentiments upon it without confusion or ambiguity. I think this proviso needful ; because, “ as the lips of the Wise disseminate knowledge *,” so a momentary misre-

* Prov xv. 7.

presentation on your part, or a misapprehension in the hearer, may have an effect quite opposite: it may propagate an error in doctrine or practice, which may not easily be corrected.

CHAP VI.

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS. THE MATTER.
THE EVIDENCES OF RELIGION.

THE Matter of a sermon may be drawn from three subjects; the EVIDENCES of Religion, the doctrines, and the precepts. The First of these, the evidences, are, I conceive, very rarely to be handled; unless indeed in the Universities, and before other learned congregations; where such discourses are rather lectures to the Student, or conferences with the Mature Scholar, a kind of Conciones ad Clerum, than homilies to the People. In all other situations I think you are to consider, that you are preaching to a Christian Congregation, who need not to have these evidences formally laid before them; to a Mixt Assembly, great part of which cannot distinctly apprehend them; and within such limits of Time, and under such other circumstances, as render it impossible that they should be displayed and seen in their full force. Much less would I advise you to enter into objections made by unbelievers; all of which are answered over and over in their proper place and manner, and the books are accessible to every one who is competent to read them. It is

the height of imprudence to disturb the minds of a Congregation with doubts which never would have occurred to them, (nor perhaps, some, to any unprejudiced inquirer,) and depend for their full solution upon branches of learning which they do not possess, and upon details which cannot be set forth, or taken in, satisfactorily in a short oral discourse. Your province, as a Preacher, seems to be rather to declare, expound, and inculcate, the truths of the Religion, into the belief of which all your hearers have been baptized; while you are ready to lay open in private, to any of them who shall desire it, the Evidences of his Faith, and to resolve any apparent difficulties attending them.

You may observe that the Apostles, after the example of their Master, when they preached the Gospel to the Jews, never entered into any preparatory proofs of the being and attributes of God, or of the divine mission of Moses and the Prophets: nor to the Gentiles did they demonstrate, as a point unknown or questionable, the Existence of the Deity, but only his unity, spirituality, and providence; "whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you: God that made the world*," &c. In like manner, when they come, in their Epistles, to address their converts, whether Jew before or Gentile, they pro-

* Acts xvii. 23—31.

ceed upon “ the foundation already laid, Jesus
 “ Christ *.” Occasionally “ leaving even the
 “ first principles of the oracles of God and of
 “ the doctrine of Christ,” they led them on
 “ unto perfection †:” correcting such temporary
 misconceptions and inventions as were raised
 upon this foundation, “ the wood, the hay, the
 “ stubble ;” and illustrating the permanent doc-
 trines which rested upon it, “ the gold, the sil-
 “ ver, the precious stones ‡.” To the Uncon-
 verted indeed and Unbaptized, they speak in-
 cessantly (after the same divine example) of the
 NECESSITY of Faith, as a requisite qualification
 for Baptism and instrument of Justification, that
 is, present justification, namely, pardon of sins
 past, and admission into the new covenant of
 Grace ; “ if thou believest with all thine heart,
 “ thou mayest be baptized § :” “ believe on the
 “ Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ||.”
 But to the Believing Disciple, already admitted
 by Baptism into the Church of Christ, they ge-
 nerally discourse only of the Nature of Faith,
 and of it's Genuine Effects ; the Duties which
 flow from it, and the Rewards which accompa-
 ny it. Upon these principles, and upon these
 examples discreetly applied, you may, I con-
 ceive, build this conclusion : as you must now

* 1 Cor. iii. 11.

† 1 Cor. iii. 12.

|| Acts xvi. 31.

† Heb. v. 12. and iv. 1, 2.

§ Acts viii. 36, 37.

think it a manifest mistake in some eccentrical Preachers in this Christian Country, to be perpetually haranguing upon Faith in Christ, and Justification subsequent, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, as if they were Missionaries to a Heathen Tribe, who had never so “much as “heard of the name of Jesus,” or “whether “there be any Holy Ghost *;” so you will probably hereafter, when you yourself become a Preacher, deem it unnecessary, and injudicious, to expatiate largely and formally upon the grounds and reasons of this Faith, and the cavils which have been opposed to it, before hearers who, you have every cause to hope, are already “well grounded and settled therein †.”

This method, it is true, has some countenance from wise and good men who have gone before us. They had doubtless their motives: one of which might be, that several infidel argumentative books sprung up in their time: they were read and talked of: serious Christians might be perplexed by them: sermons alluding to them might be thought seasonable, and heard with attention, and possibly with profit. The case with us is different. These books have been amply confuted, and are now little read. Modern objectors do not much exercise their genius in the pleasure of invention, or their industry

* Acts xix. 2.

† Colos. i. 23.

in the labour of long deductions. They are generally contented with conveying the essence of the old argument in some compendious vehicle; in an Accurate quotation, a Natural allusion, or a Goodhumoured and Seasonable joke. They who are so unhappy as to be misled by them, are not deluded by illconducted inquiries, but by making little or no inquiry at all. It is to be feared, and lamented, that these insidious teachers, and their unthinking scholars, will seldom come within the reach of your public instruction: they are to be invited to deliberate examination in some other form. And therefore a perpetual warfare with them in the Pulpit is a kind of Sciamachia; a contention with an adversary who is not before you: against whom while you are "beating the air," and brandishing an illdirected weapon, you may chance to give a wound, without an opportunity of applying the remedy, to an unguarded friend.

Besides, the time consumed in these unprofitable controversies is wanting for useful purposes. Half the industry of the Builder is lost in the Defender*. You have many doctrines to declare, and many precepts to unfold. The terms of the Gospel Covenant are to be propounded continually, and the necessity of conforming to them inculcated. These weighty matters will

* Nehemiah iv. 17.

abundantly fill up the few hours in the year, which are given to you for the edification of your most Constant hearers. On all these accounts, I cannot but agree with Dr. Hammond; who thus opens a sermon upon Easter Day.

“ It were but a cold, unequal, oblation to so
 “ blessed, so glorious, a festivity, to entertain you
 “ with the Story of the day, to fetch out the
 “ Napkin and the Gravecloths, to give you that
 “ for News which every seventh day for Sixteen
 “ Hundred Years hath so constantly preached
 “ unto you. --- I must yet tell you one part of
 “ the great business of this day --- the Blessing,
 “ Saving, Office of the day to us --- the Use,
 “ the Benefit, of the Resurrection *.”

Still further. You may, I think, arrive at the point which you pursue in these digressions, by a more direct, and safer, path. You wish occasionally to confirm the Faith of your hearers. You fear perhaps, “ lest any root of bitterness springing up with poison trouble them, and thereby many be defiled †.” Now the service in which every Congregation is engaged supposes their belief of the Christian Religion. The doctrines and precepts thereof are the obvious subjects of your discourses. In treating of them you are naturally led to speak of the truth

* Sermon 9th of the first Set, on Acts iii. 26. at St. Mary's in Oxford, 1644.

† Heb. xii. 15.

of the doctrine, and the excellence and authority of the precept; partly as conformable to our natural apprehensions, principally as coming from God. The consideration of their coming from God calls into the view of yourself and your hearers, the proofs of this their divine origin, namely, the miracles and prophecies recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The recollection and illustration of these miracles and prophecies, (and not the evidences of their authenticity) is ordinarily all that is requisite to a Christian Audience for the confirmation of their Faith. You may briefly and simply set forth the unequivocal nature, the number and diversity, and the public notoriety, of our Saviour's miracles. The bare exposition of the Prophecies with their accomplishment fully proves their credibility, and more strongly still when the accomplishment is a miracle. You may further, whenever, on due consideration, you think it expedient, insist more closely on any point to which an objection has been made: and, considering that all demonstration of truth is a confutation of error*, you may state the proof so clearly and fully, that it will contain within itself, and convey to every Intelligent Hearer, a decisive answer to the objection.

I have thought it expedient to offer you this

* Rectum est mensura sui et obliqui. Τὸ εὐθεῖ καὶ αὐτὸ καὶ τὸ καμπύλον γινώσκωμεν : κριτὴς γὰρ ἀμφοῖν ὁ καινὸν. Arist. de Animâ, I. 5.

general caution : your own reflexion will direct you in the application of it. I wish you to bear it in mind whenever you write an original sermon ; and still more when you happen to transcribe from a printed one. The pious Author knew best the capacities of his hearers, and the exigencies of his times : you are to judge of yours. It is very possible that, when he came to publish his discourses, for the use of the more educated, and the deliberate perusal of the closet, he might sometimes be induced to enlarge upon his notes, prepared originally, in a less controversial form for the vivâ voce instruction of a Mixt Congregation.

CHAP. VII.

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS.
THE DOCTRINES OF RELIGION.

WITH respect to the DOCTRINES of Religion, you will think it your duty “to keep back from your Congregation nothing that is profitable to them; nor shun to declare unto them all the counsel of God * :” that is, you will endeavour to lay before them, in the course of your ministry, the whole Christian Faith; as well those articles of it which are common to All Religion, but are more clearly discovered by the Gospel, as those which are peculiar to that dispensation. Some of each kind it will be proper to set forth in appropriate discourses; others, as a part of some general topic; others again incidentally, as occasions may arise. Your own good sense and consideration will instruct you, which of them are most frequently to be handled: which are to be more briefly stated; and which more copiously explained. Thus, the attributes of God, being the vital substance of Religion, must pervade every discourse, whether doctrinal or preceptive:

* Acts xx. 20, 27.

they must occur continually, as a ground of obligation, and as an incentive to practice: in these views they cannot be too often recalled to the remembrance and meditation of your hearers. But subtle disquisitions concerning them are not likely to edify any congregation. The divine omniscience, for example, is a powerful argument, often inculcated in Scripture, for purity of heart and life. But few of your hearers will be able to follow you, and still fewer to any useful purpose, if you pursue the operation of this attribute, through all its objects and effects, into the question of predestination, or the consistency of divine prescience with human liberty. The Trinity of Persons may be considered as a Revealed attribute of the Deity. The divine essence, which is the subject of this doctrine, being incomprehensible, the doctrine cannot be explained: it can only be stated as a truth demonstrable from divers passages of the Scriptures, and interwoven with the whole procedure of the Evangelical Dispensation: for the same reason (by the way) it cannot be called into question on any other ground, than on the Written Word from which alone we have received it. The Assistance of the Holy Spirit is another doctrine which we owe entirely to Revelation; although, now that it is discovered, it appears philosophically credible and probable: for why the Supreme Intellect may not act im-

mediately upon created spirits, as effectively as it does upon matter ; or as it does upon the same spirits by the intervention of matter ; or as the same spirits act, by the intervention of matter, upon each other ; no Metaphysician can tell : nor can any one reasonably deny the probability, that, as God has in his goodness been pleased to guide us ordinarily in One of these manners, (namely by information and impulse communicated to the mind through the medium of the senses ;) he may not, on fit subjects and occasions determinable only by himself, direct us in Another, (namely by immediate communication to the mind itself :) nor can it be shewn that this gift of Grace any way derogates from the endowments of Nature, or may not influence us in perfect consistency with the free operation both of the understanding and the will. But these rational subsidiary arguments in support of a truth revealed, you may not readily make intelligible or useful to an ordinary congregation : you will rather think it sufficient to lay before them the doctrine with the scriptural proofs ; and then lead them to practical conclusions ; you will exhort them “ to work out their own salvation ” with a mixture of confidence and anxiety, because “ God worketh in them both “ to will and to do * ; ” encouraged by the as-

* Philip ii. 12, 13.

assurance of his gracious assistance, but “trembling” at the thought of not co-operating with it, and so receiving it in vain.

These few examples may serve to shew you the manner, in which I conceive you may be an edifying Preacher of sound doctrine ; stating it clearly ; proving it from the Scriptures ; confirming it from Reason, if the case permit ; and drawing from it practical inferences ; but referring all curious disputations concerning it to their proper place and occasion. It is the duty of the whole Christian Church to preserve unimpaired “the Faith which was once delivered to the Saints *,” and recorded for the use of all succeeding generations. It will be your duty, as a Minister therein, to declare it to the people committed to your charge ; and to provide, to the extent of your situation and ability, that it may be handed down in perfection and purity from age to age, nothing being “added thereto, nor aught diminished from it †.” The several Articles of this Scriptural Faith are to form the substance, and colour the language, of your discourses : and though some of them, on account of their high order and practical tendency, demand more frequent handling and application than others, you are to suffer none to be forgotten.

* Jude 3.

† Deut. iv. 2.

But the three great points of christian doctrine, in which the whole is virtually comprehended, are, for that reason, subjects which you can never treat too frequently or too copiously; the MEANS, the CONDITIONS, and the CONSEQUENCES, of our final acceptance with God. The progressive communication of these saving truths seems to have been the object of all Divine Revelation; and therefore, to propound and recommend them, appears to be the proper scope of all human and ministerial instruction. For this gracious purpose, “God did at sundry times “and in divers manners speak” in former ages to mankind, by sensible manifestations of his presence, by the ministry of Angels, and by the embassy of Prophets; and he “hath in these “last days spoken unto them by his Son*.” For this, the Apostles, in obedience to the last injunction of their Divine Master, “went into “all the world and preached the Gospel to “every creature:†” they became voluntary exiles (most of them) from their country, and exposed themselves to persecution, imprisonment, and death. For the same end, their immediate successors made it the object of their studies and lives to propagate the Faith of Christ, and to guard it against misconception or perversion. With the same view, in succeeding ages, the

* Heb. i. 1.

† Mark xvi. 15.

piety of Princes and People conspired in building places of worship, and founding seminaries of Religion. "The gates of Hell," the devices of Satan or misguided men, or the natural mortality of it's members, "have not prevailed against the Church of Christ*." A succession of Ministers has been continued for near eighteen centuries: some indeed, for many ages past, labouring under the oppression of Mahometan tyranny; "their candlestick removed out of it's place †," and their light obscured: Others lately, under a dispensation of Providence equally awful and instructive, driven, with a part of their scattered flocks, into foreign countries by the artifice of profane rulers, and the fury of a deluded people: others, protected by Christian governments, respected and listened to by their Congregations, and leading them, as we trust, with successful diligence, in the ways of faith, virtue, and happiness. You have had the blessing to be born and educated in such a Country, and such a Church, as this: wherein, if you shall be admitted to the ministry, you can scarcely be placed in a Diocese, which will not point out to you the birth-place or pastoral residence of some learned Divine, or laborious Pastor, whose writings remain for your instruction and entertainment, and whose life is re-

* Matth. xvi. 18.

† Rev. ii. 5.

corded for exhortation and example. Let their works and history excite you to emulate their piety, their charity, and their diligence. This resemblance of their Virtues is in the power of every one. It demands no choice gifts of nature, nor special advantages of education. It will be a part of your Solemn Profession; which, meeting no impediment, will admit no dispensation. It will assuredly have a real effect upon your flock, whether you have the comfort of discerning it or not; such as will remain when you shall be departed, and “your works shall have followed you*.” But I wish you to imitate their Learning also; at all events to profit by it largely; and to become as able an Advocate for Truth, and a Persuader of Righteousness, as your talents and opportunities can make you: so using the few years in which God shall be pleased to employ you in his service, that you may hereafter give an account thereof with joy, and not with grief†.

You will, therefore, as I just now intimated, be continually impressing upon the minds of your Congregation the NATURE and TENOR of the Gospel Covenant; explaining to them what God hath in his mercy DONE for us through JESUS CHRIST, what his holiness and justice REQUIRE of us, and what, if we conform to

* Rev. xiv. 13.

† Heb. xiii. 17.

this requisition, his goodness hath PREPARED for us. You will speak of the Obedience due from every creature to the Creator: which is paid implicitly and uniformly by the Natural or Necessary agent, and “is the stay of the whole” material “world* :” which the Rational agent has the high privilege of presenting as an elective, voluntary, offering; and of deriving from the divine bounty, through his own free choice, the perfection and happiness of his Being. You will call to their recollection (a fact to which every man’s conscience bears testimony) the Imperfect Obedience of all mankind; the consequent necessity which they feel, of Mercy; and the only channel and MEDIATION through which God hath been pleased to offer it. You will state, explain, and inculcate, the CONDITIONS upon which we may receive this covenanted mercy: you will display the free gift or REWARD proposed to us, if we Accept the conditions; the loss and PUNISHMENT, if we Reject them.

These topics lead you from the Doctrines of Religion to it’s PRECEPTS.

* Hooker Eccl. Pol. i. 2, 3, &c.

CHAP VIII.

THE COMPOSITION OF SERMONS.

THE PRECEPTS OF RELIGION.

THERE are Three Qualities which determine an action or habit to be eligible. The first is the Fitness or Rectitude of it; as, for example, parental or filial affection. The second is the Beneficial Consequence or Tendency of it; as, for instance, temperance or good faith. The third is, the Conformity of it to the Will of God. The Third quality determines an action or habit to be eligible, because the First and Second do; inasmuch as it is eminently and unalterably Fit or Right, and Beneficial, for a Rational Creature to conform his actions to the Will of an All-perfect Being, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor, of all things; a position incontrovertibly evident to the human mind, and, we suppose, to every created intellect in the universe.

When an action or habit is CONSIDERED as determined to be eligible by the Two First Qualities only, it is properly denominated a Moral Virtue; when by the third, a Duty of Religion.

The Two First Qualities will always be

found, upon mature inquiry, to reside in the same subject, though not always equally evident. The *Honestum* and the *Utile* were, in the sound judgment of the Roman Moralists, inseparable*: and the Grecian writers, as hath been well observed, handsomely expressed their perpetual union by the compound word *καλοκαγαθία*. We may therefore always conclude an action or habit to have Both these qualities, if it have clearly and unquestionably Either of them: if, for example, we perceive intuitively or demonstrably that parental affection is right, we may presume it to be beneficial: if we find by deduction or experiment that temperance is beneficial, we may infer that it is right.

These two first Qualities of an action or habit, it's Fitness or Rectitude and it's Beneficial Consequence or Tendency, directly lead us to the discovery of the Third, it's Conformity to the Will of God: because, as we derive from God our being and nature, with all it's powers and faculties, particularly our Reason, (which discerns this fitness or rectitude and beneficial consequence or tendency,) we justly conclude that the determinations of our Reason, maturely collected, are True, and are to be received as the dictates of His Unerring Will. Hence whenever these qualities are clearly discernible in any action or

* Cic. de Offic. iii. 7, 8.

habit, they recommend it to our choice, not only by their own intrinsic weight and value, but as they exhibit the impress of his authority: the action or habit bears his “image and superscription * :” we trace in it’s lineaments that sovereign character of virtue, an imitation of his perfections and an obedience to his commands. And thus every Moral Virtue appears to be a Duty of Religion.

This procedure necessarily takes place in forming the moral estimate of every action or habit, concerning which there is no express Revelation of the Divine Will. Whenever there is such revelation, (except only in the case of Positive Institutions, of which I shall speak separately) the concurrence of the three qualities is the same, but the order of deducing them one from the other is inverted: the divine command obliges us to presume, and leads us to discover, the beneficial consequence or tendency, and the fitness or rectitude, of the thing commanded. And so every Duty of Religion may be shewn to be a Moral Virtue. Nor is this reciprocation of the argument to be called disputing in a Circle; that is, bringing round the last conclusion of any series of syllogisms to be the basis of the first syllogism in the same series: because here are Two Series, and each rests upon it’s

* Matth. xxii. 20.

own separate foundation; the One upon the dictate of natural reason, declaring the rectitude and beneficial consequence or tendency of any action; the Other, upon the voice of God preternaturally conveyed to us, declaring the conformity of the same action to his will. The First Principle in either series is not weakened, but strengthened, by being also the Last Conclusion of the other: and the aggregate result of both being the same, proves that there is no error in the investigation. In short, this final coincidence in our reasoning arises truly from the real simplicity or unity of the subject; which simplicity or unity must ever belong to it, although, for the accommodation of our limited faculties, we accustom ourselves to view it in parts and succession; for we cannot separate, except in idea, the rectitude and the beneficial consequence or tendency of any action, from each other, or from its conformity to the Divine Will: and, although it be convenient to distinguish in theory and discourse, it is impossible to divide in fact and practice, the ONE OBLIGATION of Morality and Religion.

I have reserved Positive Institutions for a distinct consideration. They agree with other duties of Religion in this, that the Action Imposed bears a conformity to the will of God; for it is enjoined by him: they differ in this, that, independently on the injunction, it has no

inherent, discernible, rectitude or beneficial tendency. Whence flow these consequences. 1. Positive institutions oblige by virtue of Revealed Precept Only, and those persons alone on whom they are so imposed. 2. The action imposed, antecedently to the injunction, is a thing indifferent; and not a moral virtue. 3. The performance of the action imposed, subsequently to the injunction, is a moral virtue; because it is an act of obedience to the will of God; and therefore has in it that unalterable rectitude and beneficial consequence which I before * observed to be the formal ratio, or essence, of moral virtue. Therefore, 4. the performance of this action is a duty of standing and indispensable obligation, so long, and so far, and under such circumstances, as it is understood to be imposed. 5. Whenever it happens to be incompatible with the performance of an action, which, independently of any positive injunction, is a moral virtue, we may collect from the reason of the thing and the declarations of Scripture, that, *rebus sic stantibus*, it is not imposed. 6. Positive institutions are partly Means, and partly Ends. They are means, as they minister to Moral Holiness, by accustoming the Agent to implicit obedience, by the natural impression of a religious solemnity on the mind, and by the blessing of God

upon his ordinances. They are ends, as the performance of them is itself a part of Moral Holiness, being (as above stated) an act of obedience to the will of God. But 7. so far as they are means only, they are of divine appointment, and not of human choice; they are therefore not methods of prudence only, but of duty.

I have been something the more minute in this discussion, because I wish you to comprehend clearly the grounds and measures of moral and religious obligation: in order that you may be well prepared in all your discourses, to mark the limits of every duty by it's immediate and ultimate rule, and to give due weight to every motive of obedience, principal and subordinate. And I believe all your future reading and meditation on this subject will terminate in the conclusion, to which I have been endeavouring to lead you: which I cannot express better than in the words of Bishop Sanderson; "*VOLUNTAS DEI qualitercunque hominibus revelata,*" (i. e. whether by Natural Reason inferring from the rectitude and beneficial tendency of an action the will of God concerning it, or by Supernatural Communication) "*est propria et adequata Conscientiæ regula* †." This is the Law prescribed by the unchangeable nature of things to every Ra-

* De Oblig. Conscient. Prel. iv. 20.

tional Creature *. To this he must look up for his rule of action, for his obligation, and for his recompense. How far he might derive an Impulsive sense of obligation, and prospect of recompense, from his apprehension of the Essential Difference of things, that is, of the rectitude and beneficial tendency of them or the contrary, if he were not under the direction and disposal of a Superior Will, is a question rather curious than useful ; because it supposes a case absurd and impossible, a Contingent or Created Being independent of a Necessary Being or Creator ; or, at least, a case which probably never existed,—such a Being, having ideas of rectitude and beneficial tendency, and at the same time no notion whatever of any superior regulating and controlling Power. With respect, however, to the Only Rational Nature to which we can apply the inquiry,—there is certainly inherent in it an indeleble apprehension and approbation of rectitude; however in some tribes and individuals of the Species, in various, and even extreme, degrees obscured, perplexed, and perverted. We feel in every virtuous action a sense of its intrinsic propriety and loveliness ; blended, first, with the satisfaction of expressing our reverence and obedience to our Sovereign Benefactor and Governor, and, secondly, with the hope of his

* See page 84.

acceptance and favour. These just sentiments, it is true, are awakened in us, and strengthened, by early culture and habit, by traditionary notions, by revelation, and by grace : but still the faculty which suggests, or embraces, them is the original gift of the Creator ; it is our REASON ; an essential part of our Spiritual Being, as vision or taste is of our Animal or Corporeal ; which three faculties must be all equally corrupted, or mutilated, before they can cease to distinguish, each in it's respective office, moral “good from evil, light from darkness, “and sweet from bitter*.” The infant mind has been compared to a tabula rasa, or sheet of clean paper : but there is this essential difference, as hath been well observed, between the opposite objects of the comparison ; they are not both equally Indifferent to the inscription which they are to bear : “upon the tabula or “paper you may write what you please ; that “wormwood is sweet, and sugar is bitter ; that “gratitude and compassion are base, treachery “and envy noble ; but no art or industry are “capable of making those impressions on the “mind : she hath predetermined tastes and sentiments, which arise from a source that is beyond experience, custom, or choice†.” This

* Isaiah v. 20.

† Usher's Introduction to the Theory of the Human Mind, Sec. 3.

source can be no other than the Constitution which the Creator hath given her : and these essential tastes and sentiments serve her as an immediate rule of action, and as One instrument of discerning their Archetype in His Allperfect Will. But if you wish to ascend higher, and to ask, what is the rule of action to the Supreme Creator himself ; what is the measure of that Sovereign Will which is a Law to the Universe ; turn to the beginning of Mr. Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity : which I mention to you, not only for a just and reverent answer to this question, and for the further instruction which those few pages will afford you ; but also as an early introduction to that Excellent and Judicious Person : and I hope You will soon be able to apply the saying of Quintilian, "*Ille se profecisse sciat, cui Cicero valde placebit* *."

Now as Moral Virtue or Religious Duty (for having shewn them to be inseparable, I may use the terms indiscriminately) comes recommended to our choice by the union of these three qualities, fitness or rectitude, beneficial consequence or tendency, and conformity to the Divine Will, it follows, that he who desires to excite the love of it in himself or others, will give a proportionate attention to them all : and, having in his hands a Revelation of the Divine

* *Instit. Orator. x. 1.*

Will, he will state this conformity, not only as inferible from the rectitude and beneficial tendency, but also as declared expressly by this Revelation. To resume the examples above mentioned, he will speak of parental affection, not only as a dictate of Nature; as necessary to the continuation and well being of mankind; as the principle of many other social Virtues*, and Hence proved to be conformable to the Will of God; but also as prescribed by his Revealed Law. He will discourse of temperance, not only as a precept of the Gospel, and otherwise proved to be conformable to the Will of God; but as a habit necessary to health, and conducive to long life; observing that it's Opposite is degrading to our nature, an abuse of the divine bounty which gives us the productions of the earth for our good, and a breach of justice or charity in absorbing a disproportioned share of them. If, in treating on either of these virtues, he omit the consideration of the Divine Will, he tacitly takes away the solid basis of obligation, and shuts out the prospect of future retribution: he becomes a mere jejune moralist; and so far beneath the Heathen Poets or some of the better sort of Philosophers, as they, though they had no authentic Revelation to define or to sanction their precept, yet have fre-

* Cic. de Offic. i. 17. de Fin. v. 23.

quent reference, expressed or implied, to the authority of the Deity, and the awards of a future state. If, on the other hand, he slight the Moral Argument, he loses a substantial ground of proof and persuasion concerning the particular virtues : and, moreover, he passes by so much illustration of the truth of the Revelation in general, and so much fresh motive of reverence to the Revealer, as must ever arise from the conviction that “ the commandment is ” intrinsically “ holy, just, and good *,” suitable to our conception of the essential “ holiness ” of the Lawgiver, because “ right,” and “ beneficial to his “ creatures.”

To each, therefore, of these unquestionable arguments in favour of a virtuous and religious conduct, you will allow it's due place and weight : and, in this distribution, you will find it invariably right, to rest the primary obligation and limitation of every duty on the Revealed Will of God : “ to the Law and to the Testimony †.” For,

1. This is a rule, and an authority, intelligible and conclusive, upon every subject, and to every hearer. The fitness or rectitude of an action or habit, however certain, is not in every case so striking as in the first example which I have adduced : the beneficial consequence or

* Rom. vii. 13.

† Isaiah viii. 20.

tendency of it is not always so manifest as in the second: and the conclusion to be drawn from these two qualities, the conformity of the action or habit to the will of God, must be weaker in proportion to the diminished force or evidence of the premises. Besides, the judgment of every hearer upon the rectitude or beneficial tendency of any conduct, (however demonstrable they be to an inquirer every way competent,) depends much upon his natural perspicacity, education, habits, and prejudices; these, in every congregation, are various; rarely adapted to abstract reasoning; nor always favourable to naked truth; which scarcely can preserve her independence and influence, if she come forth, in opposition to the misapprehensions and passions of men, not protected by the divine authority, not guarded by "the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God*."

The virtue which the hearer least affects will lose much of it's native comeliness in his partial and imperfect view: and the necessity of it to the general happiness will with him become problematical, if his passions have so far blinded him, as to make it appear incompatible with His Own. The practical dictate resulting from these precarious judgments is not likely to be very correct or uniform: and there is danger

* Eph. vi. 17.

that his spiritual freedom and welfare, thus left to depend entirely upon his apprehensions of the Beauty or Utility of a virtue, may rest upon “ the staff of a broken reed, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand and pierce it *.”

2. The Sanctions of virtue propounded by the word of God are incomparably more weighty and authentic, than any which unassisted Reason can offer. The rectitude of an action, indeed, ensures the approbation of conscience: the beneficial tendency of it implies a probable reward in it's natural effects: the conformity of it, thence inferible, to the will of God affords the expectation of his blessing here, and, upon the difficult supposition of a uniform obedience, (or, of such imperfect obedience as he shall graciously accept) a high probability of his larger bounty in some future state: and the opposite qualities of an action involve consequences respectively contrary. But what proportion do These Sanctions bear, either in kind, or in extent, or in certainty, to the covenanted, or mediatorial †, promises, and the express threatenings, of the Gospel?

3. Lastly, as Divine Revelation holds forth to those who are so happy as to enjoy it the clearest discovery, and the most persuasive recommendation, of moral virtue, it seems to be, at once, an act of Reason, and an offering of

* 2 Kings xviii. 21.

† Heb. viii. 6.

duty to the gracious Author of it, to look up to it as our constant and sovereign guide : “ thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path *.” A contrary habit of dwelling entirely or principally on the beauty and loveliness of this or that virtue, its present utility, or even the rational probability of its future recompense,—this Moral Preaching, though it be so far correct as it delivers Some unquestionable truths, yet is greatly erroneous in that it keeps back Others, without which, alas ! the former ones would avail us little towards clearing our prospects in another world ; still less (such is the corruption of our nature, and so hath been the fact in all ages) for the effectual guidance of our manners in the present. It diverts the attention of the hearer from the great truths of the Gospel, its doctrines, its precepts, and its sanctions ; all which together form the adequate object of his faith, the law of his conduct, and the measure of his expectations. To limit your instructions and exhortations to any inferior speculations, rules, or motives, is to guide your followers with a candle after the sun is risen : it has a natural tendency to contract their views to the few small objects within the narrow circle of this imperfect vision ; to make them shrink from the enlarged and more splendid

* Pf. cix. 105.

prospects, which the Celestial Light would present to them; at length, to lead them to forget that he shines around them, or even forcibly to shut him out from their sight. To speak plainly, I cannot but look upon such mere moral discourses as the effect of considerable and dangerous inadvertency; inasmuch as, by narrowing the foundations, and weakening the sanctions, of Christian Morality, they hazard the Virtue of the hearer; and, by continually withdrawing from his view the Christian Doctrine, they imperceptibly prepare him to renounce his Faith.

The Apostle of the Gentiles studied, indeed, to “please all men in all things* :” he made “himself all things to all men†,” that he might benefit all. But his moderation extended only to matters indifferent; such as had no interference with faith and virtue. In points of importance to the Christian Doctrine, “he did not give place by subjection, no, not for an hour;” to the end “that the truth of the Gospel might continue with his disciples‡.” If therefore (your only probable temptation to this jejune manner of preaching) you should, unhappily, have cause to suppose, that any part of your Congregation may attend with greater relish to the moralities of Natural Religion,

* 1 Cor. x. 33. † 1 Cor ix. 22. ‡ Gal. ii. 5.

than to the doctrines and laws of the Gospel, this would be a weighty reason why you should rather endeavour to correct their vitiated taste, than deprave it incurably by indulgence; and a still stronger argument, why you should beware of giving them occasion to confirm or propagate their prejudices, by any misapprehension, or wilful misapplication, of your example and authority.

WHEN you shall have given this just and necessary preference to the Revealed Will of God, as the primary ground and measure of Christian duty,—“*hinc omne principium, huc refer exitum **,”—every train of argument opening with this as its principle, or pointing to it as its conclusion;—you may then, with great propriety and advantage, inculcate moral virtue from the concurrent additional consideration of its intrinsic excellence. For

1. The rectitude and beneficial tendency of any action being the natural means of discovering its conformity to the Will of God, they form a presumptive proof (though not a decisive one) of the authenticity of that Revelation, which, enjoining the action, declares such conformity; and therefore they add considerable strength to the external evidence which attests the revelation. They, further, display the har-

* Hor. Carm. iii. 6.

mony of the Divine Proceedings; shewing us that the wise and good Creator prescribes to us the same salutary lesson in his works and in his word; that he guides us in the same path, and to the same end, by the essential frame of our rational nature and the settled constitution of things around us, as he does by the occasional illumination of the minds of his Prophets and the temporary suspension of second causes. Whether, (as in some ages and countries) he, in the ordinary course of his Providence, suffer “all things to continue as they were from the beginning of the creation *,” or (as in others) he “make a new thing, or create a creature †,” i. e. exert his almighty power and declare his sovereign will by miracles, which are, as it were, a second creation and a new order of things natural, he promulges in either way, though with divers degrees of evidence, amplitude, and precision ‡, the same unchangeable laws of Moral Virtue.

2. Our natural apprehensions of the rectitude and beneficial tendency of any action serve as a guide to our just interpretation and application of the revealed precept concerning it. The imperfection of language, and the unavoidable generality of law, render this assistance some-

* 2 Pet. iii. 4. † Numb. xvi. 30. See Margin and Heb. Matth. v. 17—48. and xix. 3—9.

times necessary : and herein lies the true province of Reason, after establishing the Divine Authority of the precept, to ascertain its meaning and extent ; to bring it down, by a just distribution, to all the cases directly comprehended under it ; and to apply it, by a sound analogy, to all other cases collateral and referible to it. The whole business of Casuistical Divinity lies in these investigations. The object of them is, in every divine law, to find out the *Mens Legislatoris*, the Will of God ; this we know to be the result of his wisdom and goodness, pursuing the best ends by the best means ; promoting the wellbeing of his Rational Creatures by the practice of virtue : where then shall we look for it, but in the natural sentiments which He Himself hath given them of Moral Rectitude and Utility ? of *τα ΚΑΛΑ και ΩΦΕΛΙΜΑ τοις ανθρωποις* * ?

3. The sentiments of moral rectitude impressed upon our nature, and the maxims of utility deducible in theory and confirmed by experience, serve, under the Habitual Guidance of Revelation, although (it may be) without an actual, sensible, and perpetual, reference to it, as a Constant and Immediate Rule of Action in the daily conduct of life. We believe that some of these native sentiments or primary

* Tit. iii. 8.

principles, and we have reason to suppose that many others, were confirmed and improved by supernatural communications made to the First Parents and Patriarchs. What degree of assistance these primitive Revelations gave to the natural morality of the Heathen World, it is impossible to ascertain : that it was very considerable, may be concluded from the ordinary effect of education and tradition, and from the historical probabilities adduced by the Learned. The religious information which the Hebrews under the Mosaic institution received, from the traditionary faith of their ancestors, a written history and law, and a succession of prophets, though far from superseding the use of Reason in the investigation of moral duty, (which is a thing impossible,) yet rendered it's auxiliary exertions, and in a greater degree its pure determinations, less discernible than they were among the Pagan Nations. And as to Ourselves, who live under the Evangelical dispensation, our natural stock of moral knowledge has been so enriched by the accumulated influx of supernatural instruction, that we can by no easy calculation refer our treasures, each to it's proper source. The lights of Reason and Revelation fall upon our path in rays so blended, that we walk like the Summer-Evening Traveller, who, enjoying at the same time the full orb of the Moon and the Sun's solstitial twilight, is unable to ascertain the proportion in

which he is indebted to each of these Heavenly Luminaries : and some of us, alas ! are such Incompetent Philosophers, as, because the Greater is below our horizon, to attribute all to the Less. But the Intelligent Observer acknowledges with gratitude the joint assistance of both : and while he measures the general tenor of his way by the Written Word of God, he guides his steps continually by the correspondent and concurrent law imprinted on his heart. An habitual sense of duty, by whatsoever medium acquired, improved, or drawn forth into action, whether by instinct, or intuitive perception, or reasoning, or written revelation, or divine grace, prompts him to every virtuous deed. When he does to others as he would they should do unto him, he contemplates, some times the equity and utility of the Law, at others the divine authority of the Lawgiver. While he receives, with reverence, this cardinal precept of social virtue from the Heavenly Preacher on the mount, he feels it so conformable to his reason, and so impressive on his affections, that he wonders not that the Heathen Orator had a glimpse of it, *ἀ πασχοντες ὑφ' ἑτερων οργιζεθε, ταυτα τοις αλλοις μη ποιειτε **. He “ visits the fatherless and widows in their affliction,” viewing it always as a duty of “ True Religion † ;” but one hour

* Isocrat. Nicocl. sub fin.

† James i. 27.

he looks to it's rational foundation in our common nature, "*Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*;" at another, to its authoritative obligation in the dictate of the Apostle and the example of his Divine Master. The Teacher therefore, who is appointed to encourage and confirm him in the discharge of these unchangeable duties, will present them to him in each of these views alternately. He will press the One Bond of Moral Obligation by the Three Different Cords * into which it may be untwisted; and will draw him to duty and happiness by the union of the whole.

4. Lastly, in this manner of guiding and impelling your Congregation in the path of duty, you are supported by the example of the Holy Scriptures: wherein, though the moral precept is usually delivered with an authority suitable to a Divine Revelation, and in the peremptory language of Law †; yet frequently the supreme

* See Bp. Warburton Div. Leg. I. 4. p. 76—78. Quarto Ed.

The THREEFOLD CORD there mentioned is differently compounded: comprehending, 1. MORAL SENSE, or an instinctive pleasure in a right action and distaste to a wrong, prior to all reflexion on the nature or consequences of either; 2. REASON, discovering that this pleasure and distaste are founded on an essential difference between a right action and a wrong; 3. THE WILL OF GOD, inducing a moral obligation to act according to this essential difference: the first and second referring, very truly, to the Manner of our Discerning that an action is eligible, the third to a Cause, the Principal one, why it is so. My subject has led me to state the Three Causes why an action is eligible.

† Exod. xx. Matth. v. 21—44.

Legislator is pleased to appeal to our natural apprehensions *, and to permit us to plead from them on the equity of his dispensations and commands †. Our Blessed Lord though he taught, as the Jews observed, with the ἐξουσία, or delegated authority, of a Prophet ‡, and in the sovereign style of one greater than a Prophet §, yet he continually referred his hearers to their own acknowledged principles, and to the intrinsic reason of the thing ||. The Apostles after him, as might be expected, drew their instructions and exhortations from similar sources ; from the dictates of the Holy Spirit so far as they had received them ¶, from the Antient Scriptures, from the directions of their Divine Master, and from the truth of the Case **.

The result of the whole is This. As the Will of God is the adequate rule of conscience ; as his Will is made known to us, partly by supernatural Revelation, and partly by natural Reason ; as the precepts of Revelation are to be interpreted and applied by Reason, and also to be recommended by it for their intrinsic excel-

* Gen. iv. 7. Ezek. xviii. 29.

† Gen. xviii. 23—25. Is. v. 3. Mic. vi. 1—5.

‡ Matth. vii. 29.

§ Εγώ δε λέγω υμιν.

|| Matth. xii. 11, 12.

¶ 1 Cor. vii. 10—12.

** St. Paul, passim. See Acts xvii. 2. xxiv. 25. xxvi. 8.

lence ; it seems meet that you should inform and guide your hearers by a careful reference to each of these Heavenly Monitors in due order and combination ; being assured that, whenever they are properly attended to, they will agree in laying down and enforcing One Measure of Moral and Religious Duty.

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CHAP. IX.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION AND ADMONITION.

YOU will think it your duty to cultivate in your Parish a religious temper and virtuous behaviour as well by Private Instruction, "Monition, and Exhortation*," as by a diligent and reverent performance of the public services of the Church.

If you shall happen to be placed in a village or small town, you may acquaint yourself with the persons and general christian behaviour of your whole flock: if in a large town or other populous district, your information will reach only to a part of it, greater or smaller according to circumstances. In this latter situation, you will give to those within your knowledge that private attention which you would willingly extend to all. On this footing the same advice may be useful to you, whatever may be the size and population of your Cure.

Your charge will consist of Three Classes: Adult persons, who are constant at Church; such of them as are Infrequent there; and Children.

* Ordination Service, Priests.

The First Class have ordinarily little or no occasion for private instruction or admonition, except in the way of commendation and encouragement, or information and exhortation upon some particular subject. They afford you the desirable opportunity of instructing them in the Congregation, and a fair hope that “your words do not all fall to the ground*.” If you should find it expedient to advise them privately, as probably you sometimes may concerning the Lord’s Supper, or perhaps some of the neighbourly duties, you have a prospect of your kind offices being received with good temper at least, and frequently with improvement.

Your conduct towards the Second Class is one of the most arduous and delicate parts of our Function. There is generally, in men who are in a habit of acting wrongly, either a foreboding and irritability, or else a callousness and reserve, or sometimes even a mixture of both, which makes the charitable overtures of the Spiritual Physician a painful undertaking, and too often an unsuccessful one. So much depends upon the temper and capacity of the party, upon his rank and education, upon the nature and extent of his misconduct, upon your relative age and situation, and other circumstances, that I cannot propose any method of

* 1 Sam. iii. 19.

acting which will suit every case. I can only advise you in general.

First. In any difficult case, consider whether admonition be expedient; that is, whether it will probably tend to promote or defeat the good ends which you have in view: as, whether it be likely to make an open breach with the person, and so put an end to good neighbourhood, and take away the influence of ordinary conversation: whether he err through want of general knowledge; or through want of information on the particular point; or from sudden temptation and transient forgetfulness of acknowledged principle; or, lastly, from fixed systematic opinion, and habits seemingly incurable. In this deliberation you can only exercise your best discretion, assisted perhaps by the counsel of a very prudent friend; not allowing yourself to be biased by any indolence, or by any quickness, of natural temper, much less by any selfish consideration; remembering, that the probability will generally be, that advice, Well given, how coldly soever received, will leave some good impression, and ultimately produce some degree of benefit.

Secondly. Give the admonition in confidence and privacy, with great mildness, with marked indications of the sense of official duty, and of the personal good will, by which you are actuated; soothing all emotions of anger in the

party, by a patient appeal to his ^{own} mind, whether you are not acting rightly and charitably towards him ; urging your advice, more or less at a time according to his reception of it, with calm earnestness, and discreet perseverance.

Thirdly. When you have done your duty herein to the best of your judgment and ability, leave the event to God : on the one hand, studying to keep your conscience clear of any wilful inattention or omission ; on the other, not perplexing your mind with needless anxieties ; nor embarrassing your intercourse with your parish by an illjudged activity, and so counteracting your good intentions, and possibly increasing the evil ; continuing all christian offices, and, if you are allowed, and can without scandal, preserving an acquaintance of civility, even with those of whose reformation you almost despair ; repressing the indignation which is apt to arise in the mind upon the view of incorrigible folly and wickedness, by the recollection of your own failings, by the natural sentiments of humanity, and by the mild spirit of our religion.

The time of Sickness is manifestly seasonable for spiritual advice, whether designed for the reformation of the careless, or the further improvement of the serious ; particularly in the Early stages of Chronical distempers ; wherein the Patient has more strength and spirits to attend to your instruction, and the probability of more

time to benefit under it, than in Later periods, or in Acute diseases. The Order for the Visitation of the Sick prescribes very discreet and comprehensive rules and forms for our general proceeding in these cases : and the Seventy-sixth Canon further authorizes the Minister, “ if he
 “ be a preacher, to instruct and comfort the
 “ Sick, as he shall think most needful and convenient.”

The Third Class presents a pleasing and promising object to your care. There are two means necessary to the religious education of Children ; Regular Attendance at Church, and a School. The bare habit of distinguishing the Sabbath Day, and the constant hearing of Divine Service, are productive of great advantages ; as well in the early reverence which children are likely to acquire thereby for God and Religion, as in the knowledge, how small soever at first, which they may collect from the Liturgy and Sermons. In addition to this general source of information provided in the public service for Every Age, the Church hath framed a particular introductory system of Christian Religion for the instruction of Children. But neither the one nor the other can have it's full effect, without the assistance of a Reading-School. The Minister is directed by the Fifty-ninth Canon, and the Rubric subjoined to the Catechism, at the times therein prescribed, “ to ex-

“ amine and instruct,” and “ to hear and teach, “ the children, youth, and ignorant persons,” in the whole or part of the Catechism. A considerable degree of christian knowledge may, probably, with great diligence, be conveyed to these Catechumens, at those stated seasons and other opportunities, although they cannot Read, nor have been previously taught the Catechism : but it will bear no proportion to that which may be instilled into them on the Contrary Supposition, by the Minister’s examination of them in the Catechism already learnt, by his additional instruction, and by little compendiums to be read at school and at home. And it will assuredly make a great difference in their religious information and edification during their whole life, whether they shall be able to read aloud the Psalms and Responses, and to assist their apprehension and attention in other parts of the service by following the Minister in the Prayer Book ; or whether they shall be only Hearers throughout the whole Liturgy, condemned irretrievably “ to occupy the room “ of the unlearned,” and to understand very imperfectly all the supplications and “ thanksgivings “ to which they say, Amen *.”

It is surely a notion very illfounded, and therefore I hope and presume, not very generally

* 1 Cor. xiv. 16.

adopted, that any child is “over-educated,” or learns too much for his condition, if he be enabled to read his Bible, his Prayer Book, and some plain account of his christian belief and duty. The distinction of place and office in society ought certainly to be great and manifest and various ; without it no civilized community can exist ; and the plan of education, and the kind and degree of knowledge, ought to be adapted to each order and calling in almost infinite diversity: so that any thing like an universal diffusion of learning would be as absurd and pernicious, as any other scheme of political equality. But in one respect we have all one common place, one rank, and equal duty,—to be the servants and worshippers of God ; to learn his Will, to offer him the devotion of our hearts, and the obedience of our lives. For this situation and profession, to which all are born, and all Christians have been solemnly dedicated, we cannot but desire that all may be reasonably qualified. The education above-mentioned requisite to this important object, does not contravene any sound principle of worldly policy. The Acquisition of this circumscribed knowledge, especially at so early an age, gives no interruption to the proper employment of the poorest peasant ; so far otherwise, that domestic and manufactory arts, such as sewing, knitting, spinning, are commodiously learnt,

together with it, in the same school. The Possession rarely inspires a sentiment or pretension, unsuitable to his humble station, or tempting him to desert it. Whenever this happens, it is an indication of talents adapted to some higher place in society, from which it would be neither Just nor Politic to detain him. For with what equity, or to what end, should he be precluded from any of the various prospects, which this Country opens to genius and industry? Use the natural, reasonable, means of giving him christian principles, and of impressing upon him a sense of his duty to God and Man; and you will probably hereafter see him a useful member of the Community, in whatever department of it he may be found.

A Secondary benefit of these Schools is not to be forgotten. They give you access to the Parent; who is usually conciliated by the attention paid to the Child, and is frequently drawn thereby within the reach of public and private instruction. This is a valuable consequence, upon which experience shews that you may rely.

These Schools seem to be still more necessary to the comfortable discharge of the Pastoral Office in large parishes, than in small: because they are the only certain means of bringing all the children within the compass of your instruction and superintendence.

It will therefore be your early wish to esta-

blish, or carry on, or improve, as the case may happen, one of these little parochial seminaries of Religion. You will be very unfortunate indeed, if you fall into a Parish so destitute of Charity and Public Spirit, as to give you no assistance towards so good a work : if you should, I hope you will have resolution and ability to enter upon it alone. A great variety of tracts calculated for the improvement of every age may be found in the Catalogue of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge ; of which you will probably, at some time, become a Member.

CHAP. X.

PERSONAL CONDUCT.

THE Rectitude of your Personal Conduct will turn upon your attention to three points ; your Morals, your Studies, and your Pastoral Duties.

Of your attention to your morals I shall say little. I will not dishonour you so much, as to insist on the integrity and purity of life, and the reverent attention to the public and private offices of Religion, which must appear to every man of sense and reflexion, whatever may be his place or profession, the ornament of his intellectual nature, and the substance and spirit of his christian character. I will barely observe to you, that the World will always expect from every distinct order of men, a greater portion of the particular merit or quality, which they are understood to profess ; whether it be religion, learning, political wisdom, courage, or any other. They have Reason on their side : and Passion also may sometimes interfere imperceptibly, in framing the comparative measure, and in urging the demand ; especially with respect to a profession, of which the end and duty is, to inculcate the necessity of the same quality in other

men. It may therefore require an extraordinary degree of moral vigilance, to answer the call of your own Conscience, and the equitable expectations of others; and some portion of prudential circumspection also, to obviate their prejudices.

In attending to your moral character, your studies, or your pastoral duties, I do not conceive that you are obliged to seclude yourself entirely from the business of the world, or from its reasonable pleasures; particularly from one of the greatest satisfactions, Suitable Society. I rather think that we are more likely to be successful in our addresses, public and private, if we attain a general knowledge of human nature, life, and manners, and an acquaintance with the sentiments and habits, the virtues and the failings, of each class; of that particularly, which it may be our special duty to superintend and benefit. Moreover, as the general complexion of the society in every country and neighbourhood is the result of the various dispositions and characters of those who compose it, as a ray of light is of the several prismatic colours, a virtuous person of Every rank and order does well to contribute his share to the general mass: he will give to it, unnoticed by himself and others, some measure of light, and tint, and strength; and it is possible, that, by the conciliating influence and assimilating power of all things which are "true,

“and lovely, and of good report *,” he may, contrarily to the natural phenomenon alluded to, exceed his original proportion in the composition of the whole.

But this idea may very easily be carried too far. The pleasure of social converse is so natural and reasonable, and, if you have company suited to your education and taste, so attractive, that you may readily be tempted to allow to it a larger portion of your time †, than ought, in all fair estimation, to be withdrawn from the business to which you have devoted it. You may find day after day pass so agreeably in respectable societies of middle life, or in the more polished circles of the higher, and perhaps in the pursuit of that kind of literature or other accomplishment which may render you more acceptable to either, as to be induced to relax your attention to the severer studies, and stricter duties, of your Profession. It is even possible that you may unwarily enter so much into promiscuous company and questionable amusements, as to hazard the propriety of your conduct, or at least the opinion of the world concerning it; and so, in a degree, to abate your zeal, and diminish your ability, to do good.

* Phil. iv. 8.

† *Amici sunt fures temporis*: an old adage, very worthy your notice and consideration, for your first seven years especially: compare once in a week, the hours given to company and to study!

I hope therefore you will never allow yourself to forget, that the life of a Clergyman, though it should by no means be reserved, austere, and unsociable, yet ought to be, in its general cast and tenor, a life of Seriousness, Reflexion, and Study. It is the life of a Scholar, with many active duties of high importance annexed. You have a Work to do ; you have engaged to do it ; and “ the night cometh *.” This work is no other, than to promote and improve in your Parish, and in the world, the reverence, knowledge, and practice, of Religion. It is not a *παρεργον* ; a thing to be accomplished *horis subsecivis* : it ought to be the leading thought of your mind ; and the main drift of all your operations. Look round upon your neighbours and acquaintance in the various departments of life. Observe the time and application given, first to the previous study, and then to the practice, of the two other Learned Professions. Mark the procedure of men in callings not connected with literature. The Merchant is daily upon the exchange or in his counting house ; and the Tradesman is in his shop. The Farmer “ rises “ up early” to the cares of the field, or the transactions of the market : “ he late takes rest, “ and eats the bread of carefulness †.” The Artificer and the Labourer, constant as “ the

* John ix. 4.

† Ps. cxxvii. 3.

“returning sun, go forth, each to his work until the evening*.” And will You Alone “stand all the day idle†?” neither looking into the spiritual concerns of your Flock; nor providing matter for their improvement; nor enlarging your knowledge in divine things, in order to their better edification, or to the making of yourself in any other way more useful to the Church of God? I would not have you pass through the scene of life, a mere *Muta Persona*, sustaining no character, and contributing nothing to the general design: much less would I have you slight a part, at your own request, allotted to you; which, though neither splendid nor prominent, will always have a considerable influence upon the sentiments, manners, and issue, of the whole.

Your function will be to Instruct and Persuade mankind upon a point infinitely important to their happiness. Every office demands Qualifications commensurate to its object: and the requisite Extent of these qualifications may vary with Times and Circumstances. An Inspired Evangelist ‡ stood less in need of human learning, than an ordinary preacher of the Gospel: and the Apostle of the Gentiles might apply with advantage to his hearers in Greece and

* Pf. civ. 22, 23.

† Matth. xx. 6.

‡ In the sense of 1 Cor. i. 17. 2 Tim. iv. 5. and passim.

Italy, the great mental endowments and acquirements, which were not equally useful or necessary to the Ministers of the Circumcision. A Jewish Doctor before the Captivity, wanting only his native language to understand the Scriptures and explain them to the People, was excused the labours of the Targumists. The Apostles on the day of Pentecost, though they had occasion for divers tongues, had no call for the learned industry of Origen or Jerom. In the days of Popish ignorance and tyranny, when the Vulgate was considered as the standard, and tradition and authority as the sole expositors, of Scripture, the Christian Minister had no great occasion or encouragement to acquire a critical knowledge of the ancient languages: but as a happy change of circumstances has long since opened the way to learned interpretation and free inquiry, and intellectual vanity and other human passions have in later times Abused these privileges, it seems convenient that a modern Preacher of the Gospel should be qualified to participate, and communicate, the Benefits of an enlightened period, and also to guard himself and others against the Extravagancies incident to it. So various, in different times and situations, may be the kind or degree of intellectual endowment, necessary or expedient to the Pastoral Office.

In weighing therefore your pretensions to be

admitted into the Ministry of the Church of England, and in forming the plan of your studies subsequent to your admission, you will do well to consider what is the general state of knowledge in this Age and Country. Bishop Sanderson observes: “ In judging of our abilities for any Calling, we should have regard to “ the outward Circumstances, of Times and “ Places, and the rest. Those gifts which “ would have made a sufficient Priest in the “ beginning of the Reformation, in that dearth “ of learning and penury of the Gospel, now “ the times are full of knowledge and learning, “ would be all little enough for a Parish “ Clerk *.” I suppose he means, partly, that more learning, general and theological, Existed in those days than some eighty or ninety years before; and partly, that the same learning was more widely Diffused. Whatever have been the Actual Improvements in knowledge since the days of this able Casuist, (and in some branches of science they have been considerable;) the more general Distribution of it, and (the natural consequence) the still more general Pretension to it, are unquestionable. And therefore it behoves every young person who enters upon a Learned Calling, if it were but for his own reputation, and the honour of his Profession, to

* Sermons, vol. i, p. 208. Fourth ad Pop. on 1 Cor. vii. 24. A. D. 1621.

take good care to proceed with the times, *pari passu* at least : he will wish to preserve a Decided Pre-eminence in the literature relating to it, over those who are not under the same engagements : and he will be unwilling to be found Inferior in General knowledge, to those who have not been blest with equal leisure, education, and opportunity. You will therefore, even on This account, scarcely consent to disparage yourself and your order by an unreasonable economy of your time and labour : nor descend so low as to limit your attainments to any inferior measure, which the undesirable circumstances of former times, or any special exigency in later, may have rendered barely admissible. But the end of your literary industry is not Honour, personal or professional : it is the perpetual propagation of Religious Truth ; the continuance and enlargement of its influence on the minds of men, on their behaviour consequently, and ultimately on their wellbeing : it is the Honour of God, i. e. the display of his attributes in the perfection and happiness of his Creatures. These are objects on which too much thought and labour cannot easily be bestowed.

It is difficult to say which state of the human mind is least accessible to rational conviction and persuasion upon these weighty topics ; extreme ignorance, or confident superficial knowledge, or a settled indifference to the subject of

discussion. You may possibly have occasion to administer your friendly assistance to Each of these imperfections ; and you will surely be desirous, with a patient and skilful hand, to apply the proper remedies to the prevailing infirmity of a Former age, and to those which, it is to be feared, are sometimes discernible in the Present. You will be studious therefore, like the Provident Physician, by an early acquaintance with principles, and a gradual accumulation of science and experience, to prepare yourself for every case which may occur : and you will think it a wise and honourable appropriation of your time and talents, to obtain so clear and comprehensive a view of the Whole Field of Divine Knowledge, as to be at all times a sufficient and respected guide, whether to the Blind, or to the Careless, wanderer ; or to him who more steadily pursues his doubtful way, with an overweening Dependence upon his own Imperfect Sight.

CHAP. XI.

RESIDENCE.

THE Advice which I have hitherto offered you relates to your duty as a Parochial Minister, whether Principal or Assistant: the following hints will concern you only as Principal.

A Principal Parochial Minister is he who has the Cure of Souls immediately committed to him; from the Ordinary, by Institution, as a Rector or Vicar; or by Licence, as a perpetual Curate of a Church or Chapel Improprite, or of a Chapel dismembered from the Mother Church; or, in some few cases, from the Patron, by Donation, as a Minister of a Church or Chapel Donative. In each of these situations you will become, by your appointment, the Responsible Minister of the Parish or Chapelry: and having a qualified title to your Church or Chapel, and your Benefice or Curacy, for Life, and frequently a larger revenue arising from them, than is strictly necessary for the maintenance of an Officiating Priest, you will lie under some temptation to absent yourself from your Cure, to devolve the duties of it upon a Substitute, and retain a part of the revenue to

yourself. In what cases, and how far, you can do this with a Good Conscience, you may perhaps at some time of your life have occasion to consider. It may therefore be useful to you to form, at present, a general notion of the nature and extent of your obligation to RESIDENCE: I mean your Moral obligation only, excluding all consideration of Legal Restraint.

This obligation may stand on One, Two, or All, of these grounds. The first, a Specific Promise to reside. The second, a General Promise to obey a monition or injunction requiring you to reside. The third, the Nature and Designation of your Office, as a Minister assigned by law to the cure of a particular Parish or Chapelry.

First. If you are instituted to a Vicarage, you swear that you will be resident therein, unless you shall be otherwise dispensed withal by your Diocesan. A faculty to hold two Vicarages, or a Rectory and a Vicarage, seems to amount to such dispensation; because this faculty, being granted by the Metropolitan, and confirmed by the King, appears to supersede, or include, the authority of the Diocesan herein. There may be other cases analogous to this; but it exceeds my present purpose to enter into the detail. If you do not Expressly obtain a dispensation from your Diocesan, nor have other faculty or exemption equivalent, there cannot be a question of your obligation to reside.

Secondly. If you are instituted to a Rectory, you are not sworn specifically to residence. Though the Reason * of this difference between a Rectory and a Vicarage in the condition of Institution is superseded by other provisions, the difference remains. In like manner, if you are licensed to a Perpetual Curacy, or admitted to any Church or Chapel Donative, you take no oath of residence. In any of these situations, if you are admonished by your Ordinary to reside, and have no legal exemption to plead, your voluntary compliance with such requisition seems to be a part of your Canonical Obedience, due to the lawful injunctions of your Superior, and promised at your Ordination and Institution †.

Thirdly. If you are not bound to residence either by the Terms of your Institution, or by any Monition of your Ordinary, the question will turn upon the Nature and Designation of your Office as a Parochial or Local Minister. On this ground it is manifest, that in general, *primâ facie*, your duty is to reside. The rational and legal object of your creation and appointment is the Cure of the Souls of your Parish or Chapelry. It is the express purport of your Institution, Licence, or Donation, to Commit to you this Cure. This Commission is naturally

* See Burn Eccl. Law, Art. Residence, Sect. 9.

† See Archbishop Secker's First Charge to the Diocese of Canterbury.

and ordinarily, in the view of Reason, and intendment of Law, and in conformity to express constitutions, to be executed by your Personal Attendance and Ministration.

At the same time, I suppose there are cases, in which you may permit yourself to devolve, in Part, this delegation to another person. One example is, a dispensation to hold two benefices, when you reside upon either of them ; provided that, in the choice or distribution of your residence, you have regard to the comparative circumstances and exigencies of both parishes. Another, is the office of Dean or Residentiary in a Cathedral or Collegiate Church, during the apportioned time of residence : or of Archdeacon, during his attendance upon his duty. A third may be, a Clerical or Scholarlike situation, in which you are clearly promoting to a greater extent the ends of your Ministerial Office, for such portion of the year as such situation requires ; as a Larger and more Laborious Cure, or one at least in which you exercise your particular talents more Usefully ; or the superintendence of a College, or other great seminary of Religion and Learning ; or an efficient office in a University ; or the execution of some learned or useful work in the line of your Profession, requiring a particular temporary residence. A fourth example may be Infirmary, or Age, or even, possibly, Weighty Family Circumstances ;

if either of these, after you have employed your Better days and opportunities in the proper place and duties of your profession, should happen to require, for a longer or shorter time, a different situation from your benefice. As in every case of non-residence not sanctioned by law, it will be necessary for you to obtain the acquiescence of your Diocefan, so, in such as are not clear in point of moral duty, it will be very desirable to you to be supported by his friendly advice and approbation.

Without these reasons, or others similar, I think that you will not, with perfect satisfaction of mind, desert the flock which is, at your own request, committed to your charge, even for the care of another which has not the same claim to your labours. I am persuaded that you will not for any reasons, as long as you have your Health and Faculties, so far degrade yourself in your own estimation, and in the opinion of all thinking people, as to enter into the general engagements of a Christian Priest, and to accept the office and maintenance of a Local Pastor, and yet withdraw yourself from every function and employment, which bears any analogy to either of these characters.

If solid reasons should appear to you to justify your non-residence among your Parishioners, nothing can excuse you from giving them all the attention, of which an Absent Incumbent is ca-

pable. You will still be their Responsible Minister ; bound to promote their Wellbeing by every method in your power ; as, by a qualified Resident assistant, approved by your Ordinary, by your own occasional attendance so far as conveniently may be, by your advice and admonition communicated in such manner and degree as circumstances may indicate or admit. How reasonable so ever may be your Cause of Absence, you will remember that you fill the room, and enjoy the emoluments, of one who, *de Jure Communi*, ought to be present among them ; and that you are therefore a Debtor * to them, and to yourself, for every compensative benefit which you can do them. I have sometimes thought that it would be laudable in an Impropiator to reflect, that the contributions which he draws from his christian brethren, were once designed to obtain for them the edification and comfort of a Spiritual Counsellor, and for the poor among them a Charitable Friend, well qualified by good education and decent revenue to serve them in both those capacities ; and that therefore He, who in some sort represents their Ancient Pastor, owes to them more special marks of benevolence, than he does to his Ordinary tenants and dependents. The observation, I think, applies to every Impropiation,

* Rom. i. 14. 1 Cor. ix. 16.

lay, or ecclesiastical: for Purchase or Inheritance seems not so to alter the tenure of the estate, as to discharge it of it's Natural and Reasonable services; much less does Institution or Donation, gratuitously conferred, on Spiritual Persons, and on Spiritual Considerations. This particular attention, however, in an Improprator (further than the keeping of the Chancel in complete repair and Venerable Appearance, and the providing of a sufficient, or even ample, maintenance, if wanting, to the Officiating Minister) we ought perhaps candidly to consider, as a duty of imperfect obligation so little apprehended, that the performance is more to be praised and honoured, than the omission is to be censured. But Your case will be widely different. You will yourself be the Living Pastor of your Parishioners; you will receive their contributions, under the existing laws and usages, for the salutary purposes to which they were consecrated. Your moral obligation therefore to answer their destination will remain: abated indeed, for such portion of time as you shall, in foro conscientiae, judge your absence to be allowable, and with respect to such points of duty as that allowed absence shall render impracticable; but for the rest of your time, and as to other points of duty, entire.

I CLOSE the instruction which you are pleased to desire, concerning your Preparation

for Holy orders, and your Discharge of the Pastoral Office, with these few reflexions upon Residence. Your early contemplation of the subject may prevent your adopting indigested notions concerning it; and may guard you against contracting favourite habits, and entertaining partialities to particular situations and ways of life, which might hereafter either bias your judgment, and embarrass your conscience, or, at least, make it painful to you to act conformably to your Better Thoughts. I hope your future appointments will be such, that duty, convenience, and inclination, may plainly and perfectly coincide. If not, I trust that you will weigh the circumstances so maturely, and decide so impartially, as to leave no shade of dissatisfaction on your mind.

I AM sensible that, in the course of this Advice, I have sometimes entered into discussions and allusions, which may not lie entirely within the compass of your present comprehension. This anticipation in some degree is unavoidable in a scheme of instruction, put all at once into your hands, and designed to guide your thoughts and studies through the progressive improvements of several years. But I think it no inconvenience; and I have therefore taken no care to diminish it. I have, rather, been in-

clined to give you an early taste of solid truths and useful contemplations, in order to engage your curiosity and diligence. You have now an imperfect glimpse of these important subjects ; and depend in some measure on the knowledge and sincerity of him who opens it to you ; you will hereafter view them more distinctly, and judge for yourself.

CHAP. XII.

CONCLUSION.

AND now perhaps you will say “*τις ικανος?*” “who is sufficient for these things *?” I answer, perhaps no one proportionally to the dignity and importance of the work, or equally to the plans which he may form in his closet: but, according to the measure of human imperfection, Every one may become sufficient, whom God hath blest with a sound understanding, with a reverent sense of his perfections, and a charitable desire of the general happiness. These qualities will excite him, and enable him, to acquire the QUALIFICATIONS, and to discharge the DUTIES, of a Christian Minister, in a degree which may afford comfort to himself, and benefit to mankind. He will find no insurmountable difficulties in the Studies which I have recommended preparatory to Each Ordination: and afterwards, he will be daily improving his acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and the writings of our English Divines: which, together, will pour in such a flow of knowledge upon his understanding, and raise such a glow

* 2 Cor. ii. 16.

of rational piety and philanthropy in his heart, as will not fail to guide, and quicken, and encourage, him in the performance of all his ministerial functions.

I have hopes that these Auspicious Beginnings will incite You to proceed much further. You will consider that the attainments, moral and intellectual, of a Creature, from the condition of his being which excludes perfection, will for ever be Capable of improvement. Whether Ours shall be Actually progressive in a Future State, is a point concerning which, as we have no revelation, we can only argue upon probability. That they are so in the Present, we know by experience. Our Moral advancements have no prescribed limits. Our Intellectual procedure is confined, indeed, like that of the Racer in the Grecian Games *, within a CERTAIN LINE; but it has not, like his, any Ultimate Goal or Point of Rest. If, for example, we attempt to say what constitutes a Spirit, to discover the inhabitants or history of the Moon or Saturn, or to comprehend the essence of the Deity, we run *αδελως* †, and *ανομιμως* ‡, blind, or inadvertent, to the path chalked out to us, and in defiance to the Law of our nature; we lose our labour in every case, and in some we fall into Perni-

* See Hammond on 1 Cor. ix. 24. note g.

† Ibid. Ver. 26. note k.

‡ 2 Tim. ii. 5.

cious Errors. But if, on the contrary, we restrain our investigations, for instance, to the sensible qualities of matter, to the productions and transactions of this our own planet, to the relative motions, dimensions, and distances, of the rest, to the operations of our own minds, to the knowable* perfections, and the will, of God, and to the correspondent duties of Man, we then “so run that we may obtain;” nor has there yet appeared any point impassable, or degree of knowledge beyond which we may not ascend. No one can foresee to what discoveries in nature, to what depth in science, or accuracy in art, his genius and industry may carry him. There was a time when the existence of a Western Continent had not entered into the mind of the Adventurous Navigator. The Great Philosopher once little expected to explain the Theory of Colours, or to ascertain the Laws by which the heavenly bodies measure their Revolutions. Much less did the early situation and endowments† of the Dramatic Poet prognosticate the unrivalled excellence, with which he has entertained and instructed nearly Two Centuries. Theology indeed is no field for new discoveries. As the general truths of Religion, and the peculiar doctrines of the Gos-

* Rom. i. 19.

† Ille ego qui quondam gracili &c,

pel, are in Themselves, like their Object and Author, “ the same yesterday, to-day, and for “ ever *,” so it is probable that the Vital Articles of Christianity (I do not speak of unessential points, or questions of critical learning) were as well understood in the first ages of the Church, as in any later generation ; and although in any case of Doctrine, whereon the sense of the Sacred Text is controverted, no Human Authority is conclusive, yet the presumption will lie, *cæteris paribus*, in favour of that interpretation, which agrees with the Catholic Faith of the contemporaries and immediate successors of the Apostles.

Your aim therefore and expectation will not be to discover any “ OTHER GOSPEL †” than that which we have received from primitive antiquity, and we believe to be the same that “ Paul and his Brethren preached, and “ their Converts believed ‡.” Here then your inquiries will soon find their own boundary : and Wise and Happy, in my opinion, is he, who acquiescing in the obvious sense of Scripture, in the general analogy of the whole scheme of Revelation, and in the prevailing judgment of Interpreters, indulgent to the belief of others, yet resolute in preserving, and (if occasion call for it) in “ contending for,” his own, patiently

* Heb. xiii. 8.

† Gal. i. 6.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 11.

leaves the few mysteries of the Gospel, as he does the many incognita of his own nature and of the world around him, to be unfolded to him, if God shall have so ordained, in some Future State: applying his present faculties and opportunities to more practicable and more useful studies; wherein no bounds can be assigned to the Extent of his progress, or to the Benefits resulting from it to himself and others.

For with respect to your familiar knowledge and apprehension of “the things which are “revealed*,” your ability to explain and illustrate the sacred writings which record them, to propound them clearly, to press them forcibly, to defend them against contradiction or depravation; to draw men to their duty, by the persuasiveness of sound reasoning and legitimate eloquence, by a perspicuous statement of their rational obligations, by a clear demonstration of their true interest, and an affectionate exhortation to follow it; in these and similar acquisitions, you see no bounds of improvement, nor any ultimate point of excellence. You will find that the industry of every week will add something to your qualifications for the service of God. The same talents and application, which render you a sufficient interpreter of One Gospel or Epistle this month, will

* Deut. xxix. 29.

open to you another in the next. If, at any time, your present store of knowledge, your judgment in the selection and arrangement of your matter, your quickness and discernment in calling out the most suitable argument and illustration, and lastly your command of clear and impressive language, shall enable you to compose or to improve an edifying sermon; be assured that continued reading, meditation, and practice, will daily increase the facility of the operation, and still more the goodness of the work. The reasons which induced you to Enter upon these useful labours, equally urge you to Continue them. The unseen principle which impels the index of the Machine through One Portion of the circle, will carry it round in many revolutions. The Spring which actuates Your movements is a SENSE OF DUTY : which, far from being worn or relaxed by constant exercise, will be renewed and invigorated by it, as well through the Grace of God (“ for to him “ that hath,” and useth, “ shall be given *,”) as through the ordinary operation of natural causes. For exertion strengthens the faculty; and habit fixes the affections. The more you apply your thoughts to the Learning requisite to your office, the more deeply and uniformly will you feel its Obligation; you will grow, at the

* Matth. xxv. 29.

same time, a more Able, and a more Diligent, Minister.

If, desirous to impress upon your mind this reasonable advice, I may adventure so far to exceed the proper limits of my undertaking, as to conjecture why any few of our younger Clergy appear, for a time, something forgetful of their Profession, and of the habits of life which belong to it, I assign This as a principal cause : after their previous education and their admission to the Ministry, they do not proceed upon the ground of their Initiatory Studies ; but consider Academical Degrees and Holy Orders, as a certain Story or Tabulatum, to which they must at any rate raise their literary labours, in order to be upon a level with their Contemporaries, and to open their prospects in the world : and when they have attained this necessary height, they remit their exertions and throw away the scaffolding : they forget that if a building is left unfinished, the best foundation not only is useless, but also runs quickly to decay. But even this untimely ruin of intellectual ability is not the thing most to be lamented. Inattention to professional studies has a tendency to create an Indifference, and sometimes a Dislike, to the profession itself. The sublime truths, and important interests, with which this profession in particular is conversant, almost lose their possession of the mind. The Obligations which it im-

poses begin to sit lighter upon the Conscience. The regular returns of the Public Functions grow less welcome: and the discretionary distribution of the Private Duties is in some danger of being neglected or forgotten. Whereas a constant application, how moderate soever, to theological studies, keeps Unimpaired at least, if it do not enlarge, the present fund of information: it preserves to the understanding a due tone of activity; and detains the affections, however variously occupied, yet within the general influence of their proper objects. A Sermon of Bishop Sherlock, a charge of Bishop Burnet*, or one of the short instructive Discourses of Mr. Mede, a critical examination of a passage in Scripture, a review of any point of Doctrine, or a casuistical discussion of any precept, would leave a trace in the memory, and a relish on the intellectual palate, which might not be obliterated by any subsequent business or amusement of the day, or perhaps of any future time.

In truth it requires no great effort in any one, particularly in an Educated Person, to turn his thoughts to Religious Speculations: it demands only a suspension of opposite habits, and a vacation from foreign pleasures and pursuits. For Religion is congenial to the human mind. It

* See his four Discourses delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Sarum.

was, a priori, reasonable to suppose, that a Spiritual Creature, such as we perceive ourselves to be, should have ideas of things Immaterial and Future, just as the Corporeal Organ is impressed by things Material and Present; that among these, the first and principal should be, an apprehension and reverence of its Author, a notion of Right and Wrong, and a solicitude for its own Destination in all time to come; that is, an idea of Religious Duty, and of a Future State of Retribution. These sentiments, in some form and degree or other, are found to be universal. Primitive communication from Heaven might, indeed, first inspire them; or it might only confirm them: either supposition bears equal testimony to the Justness of them. The deductions of Cultivated Reason recognize them. And, lastly, these suggestions of Nature, this traditional belief of All Ages, these conclusions of Sound Philosophy, are, with great additions and improvements, sanctioned by the authentic records of a Divine Revelation, promulged with the adequate and decisive evidence of Unquestionable Miracles. So that Religion is a scheme of the most Perfect Reason, as well as of the Greatest Importance, that can be presented to the human mind. This Practical Theory, of which the basis is Truth, and the end is Happiness, it is the duty of ALL ORDERS of men to study and to recommend. To assist them in

this work of universal obligation, God hath in different ages and countries, under successive dispensations, in the several situations of his Church, and in the infinitely various circumstances of nations and individuals, afforded divers degrees of natural understanding, illumination, and opportunity. These manifold distinctions, marked out by Providence, impose upon every person his respective duty, in the application, whether it be of his One talent, or of his Ten.

YOU, who have been early admitted into a pure part of the Church of Christ, and nurtured in the bosom of a Religious Family; who will be formed in a place of Education, which unites the advantage of domestic superintendence with the cultivation of human learning and divine knowledge; in an age of much light and information, and in a season which (in This country) lays upon Christian Faith and Constancy no severer trials, than such as spring from the wantonness of Intellectual Pride, and the allurements of Temporal Prosperity; You would assuredly, in Any rank or profession, feel it your duty to listen to these Calls of Providence, which, in the calm hour of reflexion, speak as intelligibly to your Conscience, as a Voice from Heaven. If you shall determine to strengthen these general obligations by a Peculiar Appropriation of your time and labours, it will be a virtuous resolution; acceptable, we

may believe, to Almighty God, and honourable in the sight of all considerate men. Pursue then your preparatory studies with a diligence and perseverance proportioned to the merit and importance of the undertaking: and when at length you shall have received your Commission, and shall be going to the Scene of your Pastoral Duty, carry THIS REFLEXION with you, and have it ever present in your mind:

“GOD, in his essential holiness and goodness, desires the perfection and happiness of all his Intelligent Creatures. The situation of mankind was such that He saw it conducive to this gracious purpose, to send to them his Son to Atone for their Sins, to Guide and Assist them in the path of Duty, and, if they walk therein, to Assure to them Everlasting Wellbeing. This Gospel of Salvation was “foretold by his Holy “Prophets since the world began*.” Angels proclaimed it’s arrival †, and attended it’s consummation ‡. The Holy Spirit attested it by signs and wonders. Eye-Witnesses of these miracles published it to the world. Martyrs suffered to assert their belief in it. Inspired Evangelists and Apostles recorded it. A Succession of the faithful have delivered it down to the present generation. The Final Issue of all these preparations, with respect to the living

* Luke i. 70.

† Luke ii. 9—14.

‡ Acts i. 10, 11.

inhabitants of One Parish, so far as it may depend on human ministration, rests upon Your Vigilance and Fidelity. To You it is committed to declare to them the conditions of this "Great Salvation," to invite them to obedience by a just representation of the Benignity of the Covenant, of the Excellence of the Law, of the Wisdom and Goodness and Justice of the Lawgiver, of the Riches of his Promises and the Severity of his Threatnings. Upon You, conjointly with other Ministers and Christian People, depend the preservation and propagation of Religion in your age and country; and, moreover, in some degree (such is now the general intercourse of mankind) in foreign nations. Every star in the firmament, even the smallest planet, contributes to the illumination of the Universe, and to the "Glory of God *." Suffer not then the spot upon which you are appointed to spread a reflected light, to be the reverse of the favoured residence of the Chosen People †; to remain within an illuminated hemisphere, under Egyptian darkness and the shadow of Death. While "the doctrine" of the prophet "drops as the rain, and his speech "distills as the dew ‡," upon the Neighbouring grounds, let not the field of which You are

* Ps. xix. 1.

† Exod. x. 23.

‡ Deut. xxxii. 2.

the instituted husbandman *, be distinguished like the second fleece of Gideon † : let not the Flock intrusted to your care “ faint in a dry “ and thirsty land ‡ .” Suffer not a Brother to perish for lack of knowledge or admonition, to whose instruction You have devoted yourself, and for whom Christ died.”

I FORBEAR to recommend to you any progressive plan of literary improvement, beyond the few books which I have already mentioned; partly, because I think it premature to shew you, at once, in prospect, a length of travel, and extent of country, which will better please you hereafter in gradual and successive openings, and on a nearer view; partly, because when you shall have read those books with attention and meditation, you will be well able to judge for yourself of the convenient procedure of your further studies; you will have gained a Height, whence you may mark out your future course with greater distinctness and accuracy, than it can, at this distance, be delineated by your Humble Guide : who now leaves you, under the care of your Instructors, to the direction of a Good Understanding, to the impulse of a Vir-

* 1 Cor. iii. 6—10.

† Judg. vi. 39, 40.

‡ Ps. lxiii. 1.

tuous Heart, to your increasing Knowledge, and to the grace of God ; affectionately wishing you all the Good that is attainable in this Present State, and the Rewards of a Sincere Piety in a Life to Come.

THE END.

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